



A BLOSSOM

OF THE

SEA

BY

LYMAN C. SMITH



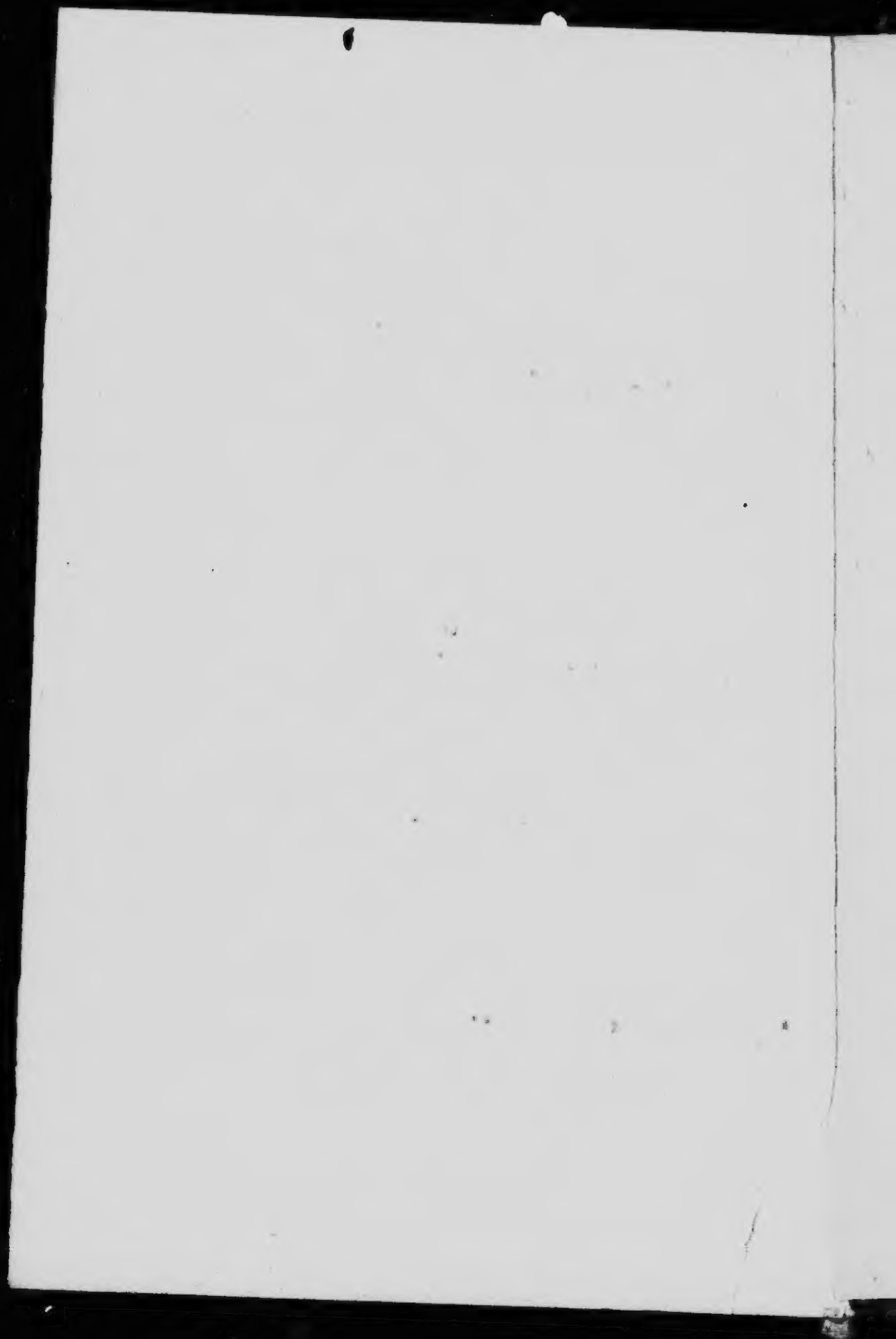
The Hon. Mr. King

With Compliments

By
Lyman L. Smith

Oshawa, Ont.,

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**A BLOSSOM
OF THE
SEA**

AND OTHER POEMS

By Lyman C. Smith

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LYMAN, C. S.

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A Blossom of the Sea



GO, LITTLE BOOK, thy silent lips unseal
For all that plod life's valleys glad or drear;
The secrets of thy maker's heart reveal
To all that deign thy simple words to hear.
Disclose what joys or griefs have swelled his breast,
What pleasures cheered, what bitter trials vexed,
What hopes encouraged, or what doubts distressed
In darker hours when mysteries perplexed.

These musings on his way, not darker made,
Nor brighter, than for thousands more beside,
May aid some soul dejection to evade,
Or glad some baffled bosom sorely tried.
Go, little book, thy silent lips unseal,
The purpose of thy maker's heart reveal.

A Blossom of the Sea

A WREATH of blooms,—or what are blooms to me,—

Meek wayside dwellers with the clustered weed,
Nor fairest nor the best that deck the mead,
Nor what I might have gathered were I free
To leave my ordered path and nearer see
The streams, whose distant call I hear, that lead
The leisured foot where banks of sweetness feed
With floating balm the height and level lea,

I proffer these to bring what cheer they may
To all that hurry on the crowded way:
For me, the breathings of their fragrant lips,
Their modest faces peering from the sod,
The touches of their velvet finger-tips,
Have cheered the darkest valleys I have trod.

And Other Poems

SHADOWS

I.

to

○ EARTH, colossal charnel heap,
To thee all life must tribute give;
Thou dost the dead of ages keep,
Shalt be the grave of all that live.

There is no morsel of thy mould
With wreck and waste of life unblent;
The dead thy heaving waters hold,
The dead are in thy bosom pent.

The bloom that lifts a timid face,
The oak that braves a tyrant blast,
Shall feel the chill of thy embrace
And mingle with thy dust at last.

The countless tissue-pinioned things
Fulfil their slender hour and fall;
The bird that to the zenith springs
Thy sordid clods at last enthrall.

The worm that mines a winding cave,
The ant that drills thy flinty crust,
Shall find their sunless home a grave
And add their atom to thy dust.

A Blossom of the Sea

Below thy heaving mounds are hid
The dead of ages all unknown;
The cliff is but a pyramid
That holds the dead embalmed in stone.

The chalk-built height a mound of shells
From which the fragile life hath fled;
Thy restless ocean foams and swells
O'er slimy deeps of shapeless dead.

The mammoth huge in forest gloom,
That crushed with stolid step thy mould,
Thy winter-fettered sands entomb,
Or sunken bogs imprisoned hold.

II.

O Earth, from days of dawning time
Hast thou been steeped in purple flood;
The monsters of the early prime
Contending drenched thee in their blood.

The timid fawn the lion tears
The brooding dove the eagle takes,
The swallow cleaving summer airs
Of whining gnat a victim makes.

The stronger rend the shrinking weak;
Nor Life her tribute may deny,
For these with sanguine claw and beak
Must sate a craving maw or die.

And Other Poems

But man with more undying wrath
The trail of slaughter hath pursued;
The taint of blood is on his path,
His brow with brother's blood imbued.

No inch of soil his foot hath pressed
But human ashes roof it o'er;
And not a clod upon thy breast
But bears the tinge of human gore.

No Alpine snow undyed is found,
No cave with unbesprinkled stones,
No plain unmarked by charnel mound,
No sea unpaved with human bones.

In all the dim uncounted years
Too many are the ways of death:
The arctic chills,—the tropic seres,—
The desert blasts with poison breath;

Fierce toil unceasingly consumes,—
The glare of molten furnace blights,—
Disease the cradled infant dooms,—
Contagion half a nation smites,—

Gaunt Famine glides through glebe and town;
They stifle in the dismal mine,—
Thy yawning bosom gulfs them down,—
They choke in swirls of seething brine.

A Blossom of the Sea

III.

O Earth, thou art the nurse of life!
O Earth, thou givest man his breath!
Then why this universal strife,
And why this carnival of death?

Is man in all the doom and din
But plaything for the whirling gust?
Is Life—this life that stirs within—
A passing eddy in the dust?

Is Life a stream whose winding maze
Must end in Death's eternal shoal?
Is Life the transitory phase,
And Death the last and final goal?

Yet from the wreck and waste of dead
The varied forms of being spring:
From ashes, from the husk and shred
Thou dost in turn the living bring.

No tree may rise from nut mature
Unless the parent nut be riven;
Is this thy changeless law and sure
That life for life be ever given?

The hidden records of thy breast,
If rightly we their secret read,
Declare thy fixed and stern behest,
"The low shall pass; the high succeed."

And Other Poems

Can this forever be thine aim?
Is this thy purpose and thy plan,
From all the fallen wreck to frame
The higher type, the perfect man

Afar the eye we backward strain:
The wave is fenced with dyke of stone,—
The marsh is gone,—the monster slain,—
We dream the world is better grown;

We dream what is and what hath been
Are atoms of a mighty whole
That, guided by a hand unseen,
Is moving to a final goal.

But what the goal? Unknown—unknown—
The fronting mists are hard to part;
We grope through shadows dim and lone
And follow whispers of the heart.

JANUARY, 1902.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE AUCTION

AT THE low sunken doorway an auctioneer stood,
And he and the crowd were in jocular mood,
For before him about on the walk were displayed
The goods of a debtor whose rent was unpaid—
Old-fashioned and shrunken, disfigured by wear,
Unvarnished, and broken beyond all repair.

"A collection of articles here I present
Such as never to hammer of auctioneer went.
Of their value as relics I need but remark
That Noah secured them to furnish his ark.
A garden unpeopled this world might have smiled
Had these not the gloom of that voyage beguiled.

"Now, here is a bed so decrepit and old
It leans for support as it stands to be sold;
Its tremulous wails of rheumatic distress
Tell the twinges of pain that it cannot suppress.
Who bids for an article useful and cheap,
A bed that makes music to lull you to sleep?

"Here's a fine chest of drawers. Allow me to state
'Twas the first Adam made when he left Eden's gate.
Mother Eve kept her bonnet in this, while in that
You'll yet find the band of his best Sunday hat;
While here, as a proof it was once Mother Eve's,
Are a few relics left of her garment of leaves.

And Other Poems

"Here's a chair: and you'll say, when it closely you
view,

That Adam could never have made more than two.
On that he perched Abel; on this he raised Cain;
That this is the cane chair is perfectly plain.
It will rock without rockers, for 'mong its good points
Are double back-acting and flexible joints."

While he jested and jeered without ceasing the crowd
As they bid or they listened laughed hearty and loud.
But apart, on the margin, dejected and sad,
Stood a grey-headed woman all shabbily clad.
No smile at the auctioneer's wit could you trace,
But the tears trickled fast down the wrinkled old face.

For she thought of a day when that chest was her
pride

And the one precious boast of a new-wedded bride;
She thought of the gown and the bridal array
That once nestled there neatly folded away.
Those few scattered leaves were a love-gift of old,
But the hand that bestowed them was crumbled to
mould.

And this was the chair where that loved one reposed
When the darkness his long day of labor had closed,
When with strength in his arm and with hope in his
breast

In the struggle of life he had stood with the best.
And this was the chair where he day after day
Sat pallid and strengthless and faded away.

A Blossom of the Sea

And this was the bed, when no more he could rise,
When the light of another world shone in his eyes
And illumined his cheek, where he sank down at last
And lay while the years drifted languidly past;
Till, one dismal morning, here clasped on his breast
The thin, shrunken fingers at last found a rest.

On that old creaking couch after day's weary round
For forty long years he a rest nightly found;
And now on that couch after life's weary close
He found from its toil an eternal repose:
No more the lip quivered with half-suppressed pain,
No pang broke the peace of his slumber again.

When the auctioneer next took a wee baby's chair—
The one single piece yet untarnished by wear—
Again rose the vision of ne'er-forgot years,
Again burst the stream from the fountain of tears,
And there broke from her lips such a moan of distress
That it told more of anguish than words could express.

In the lone happy days of the long, long ago,
Had she pleaded with Heaven a child to bestow.
The Lord heard her cry, and, in answer, of those
Best-beloved by the angels the dearest he chose.
Its hair into ringlets their hands had caressed,
Its cheeks into dimples their fingers had pressed.

Its face wore the joy of the glad seraph throng
When they circle the altar and burst into song;
Its brow had been smoothed by the Lord's shining
hand,

And Other Poems

Its lips had been touched with His red altar-brand.
The heart-winning ways that endeared it above
Awoke all her dormant affection and love.

And this plain little chair for the child was a throne
Where it prattled and sang in a low musing tone
Of the wonderful world it had dwelt in on high:
And the glad-pinioned years flitted tranquilly by
In a radiant clime of ineffable peace,
For she dreamed that her happiness never could cease.

But all that the angels can suffer of pain
They felt, and they pined for their darling again.
So downward they stole at the close of the day
Where restless and flushed on the pillow it lay.
It slept while she fondled each pain-moistened tress—
It woke at the touch of an angel's caress.

The casket was broken, the treasure was gone;
Though childless and widowed she long struggled on;
But in all of her poverty, hunger and pain
Her lost baby's chair she contrived to retain.
But now, as she gazed through the mist of her tears,
'Twas the one verdant plot in the desert of years.

The chair he uplifted. The crowd nearer pressed
Expectantly waiting the auctioneer's jest;
But his ear caught the cry and the moan of dismay,
And the half-uttered jest on his lips died away;
For he saw on her face the mute look of despair
And he read at a glance all its history there.

A Blossom of the Sea

The hammer he dropped, from his station he went,
He flung to the landlord the trifle of rent;
The chair in the hands of the mother he pressed,
Who hugged it convulsively close to her breast,
And silently lifted her tear-streaming eyes
Where gratitude mingled with joyful surprise.

The crowd saw the act and they gave him a cheer:
If the chord's rightly touched it will ever ring clear.
He found her a shelter from tempest and cold,
And it lacked not her store of the treasures of old.
With his hand and his heart moving thus in accord,
He felt something higher than earthly reward.

And Other Poems

SABLE ISLAND

[Many years ago a young lady was coming out to become the bride of an English officer stationed at Halifax, when the vessel was caught in a fog and wrecked on Sable Island. The lady was the only one saved, and succeeded in reaching land, but the wreckers, attracted by her dress, and especially by a ring she wore, robbed her and then cast her into the sea.]

I.

EASTWARD leagues from Nova Scotia,
Where across the lonesome levels
Silent, shrouded spectres creep,
Long and low lies Sable Island
Like the fabled ocean serpent,
Stretched in curves of lengthened winding
Slumbering on the sleepless deep.

There for ages have the Tempests,
Maddened scavengers of ocean,
Flung the refuse from their hands;
There have tumbled in confusion
Stifled crews and shattered vessels,
Jeweled chains and silken mantles,
Shifting with the shifting sands.

A Blossom of the Sea

II.

Years ago a gallant vessel,
Oaken-ribbed and snowy-pinioned,
O'er the heaving azure pressed:
Morning pointed hands of glory,
Evening down her shining pathway
Beckoned on with flaming beacons,
Guiding to the golden West.

Day despatched her racing rivals,
Fluttering torn and tattered canvas,
Speeding through the upper blue;
Night within his gay pavilion,
Bending low in loving homage,
Down upon the path before her
Star-enwoven garments threw.

On the shores of Nova Scotia
Stood a gallant soldier lover
Waiting for his coming bride:
In her far-off English mansion
Heads were bowed and hearts were lonely,
Loving lips were pleading lowly
For their darling and their pride.

Peering onward through the shadows,
In the dimness of the dawning
Stood she on the deck alone:
Fairer was she than the Morning
When he wears the flush of waking,

And Other Poems

When the misty loosened tresses
Lightly from his brow are blown.

Limpid were her eyes and bluer
Than the beaming liquid azure
Of the sky-bemocking deep;
For the voyage now was ending—
Ere the Angels of the Dawning
Passed again their golden portals
Would she into harbor sweep.

Voices from the verge of homeland
Seemed to fall in fainter echoes
Ever dying on her ear;
While in tones becoming clearer
Came a call across the waters
From the glowing land of sunset,
Every moment growing near.

From the margin of the homeland
Hands that closely clung in parting
Stretched across the swelling surge;
Yet her longing heart impelled her
Where the hand of lover beckoned
Onward to the land of promise
On the ocean's western verge.

III.

Never arms of mother pressed her,
Never lover's hand caressed her,
Never answered she their call;

A Blossom of the Sea

Stronger arms were stretched to hold her,
Ruder lips caressed and colder,
Louder came a call and bolder,
More imperative than all.

From the land of gloom and shadow
Noiseless came the spectres gliding—
Sheeted forms whose ghostly hands
Folded round the fated vessel
Blinding veils and wreaths of vapor,
Led her where she plunged and floundered
In the sinking, oozy sands.

Then the Tempest and his legions,
Ranged in rushing crested squadrons,
Sweeping down with boding roar,
Struck and overthrew the vessel,
Trampled canvas, mast and banner,
Bore away the bride and tossed her
Breathless, fainting on the shore.

Cruel were the sheeted spectres,
Tyrannous the trampling tempest,
But more cruel yet was man.
Waking from her swooning slumber,
Weak the sodden shore she wandered,
When a boat with wreckers laden
To the shallow harbor ran:

Fiends that quench the warning beacon,
Set the death-alluring signal,

And Other Poems

Greedy hover for their prey;
Ruthless, hungry ocean vultures,—
Pirates of the wrecked and stranded,—
Ghouls that rob the dead and dying,
Nor the living shun to slay.

Here they found the hapless maiden
Straying on the barren shoreland,
Helpless, shelterless, alone.
Pendent over velvet mantle
Hung a gleaming golden necklace,
While the jewel of betrothal
Flaming on her finger shone.

Into waiting boat they bore her,
Spoiled her of her costly mantle,
Rudely wrenched away the chain;
But her hand, with death's convulsion,
Tightly clenched the precious love-gift,
And to force it from her finger
All their efforts were in vain.

Wrathful at the maid's resistance,
Off they smote the snowy finger,
Seized the jeweled golden band;
Then the maiden, bruised and bleeding,
Flung they from their floating shallop:
Shrieking sank she in the surges,
Holding high her wounded hand.

A Blossom of the Sea

IV.

Long the lonesome lover lingered,
Long the mother interceded
With the deaf, unheeding wave;
Though the months to years were growing,
Ship nor sailor brought *him* tidings;
Naught but mocking, moaning echoes
To *her* cry the ocean gave.

In a seaport of Acadia
Was the ring at last discovered,
Once the treasure of the bride.
And the roving wretch that sold it,
Lying in a home of mercy,
Conscience-tortured, horror-haunted,
Gasped the ghoulish tale and died.

V.

Still when ghostly mists are gliding
Near the coasts of Sable Island
Is a slender maiden seen
Lifting hand with severed finger,
Passing like a fleeting shadow
Over shallow sea and shoreland,
With a sorrow-troubled mien,—

Seeking, restless and bewildered,
'Mid the misty maze of waters,
Where her westward path may lie;
Ever thwarted, ever turning,

And Other Poems

Ever more perplexed she wanders,
Searching for her vanished jewel,
With a tender plaintive cry.

There amid the maddest tumult
Of the Tempest, hoarse with passion,
One the maiden's moaning hears
Sinking to a sobbing whisper,
Swelling to a scream of terror,
Till beneath the bubbling billows
Swift the phantom disappears.

A Blossom of the Sea

LAMENT OF A SKELETON

[Near Mentone, in France, has been unearthed in a cave, under a large accumulation of later deposits, a grave containing two skeletons, evidently those of a man and a woman, lying side by side, with trinkets scattered around. These were all removed to the museum.]

I N AGES gone, when Time and Earth were young,
We trod the wildness of the swampy gloom
Where night of horror ever round us hung;
We heard with awe the mighty billows boom
And break upon the beach with sounding crash;
We saw the rivers delve their dykes of stone,
Or burst the barriers of the hills and dash
Primeval monarchs from their seated throne.
Within the pathless forests we pursued
The mighty monsters; or for life we fought,
And when the snarling savage lay subdued,
His shaggy spoils for food and vesture brought
Within the murky hollows of our cave.
Where jutting shelves of jagged rock were piled
On shapeless shattered walls, and gave
A dismal shelter from the winter wild.

We lived our lives. With zeal we blindly did
The lowly task allotted us,—with crude
Materials of the early world amid
The rugged cliffs to make a pathway rude

And Other Poems

For after-feet to widen and improve:
For all the generations of the past
Have merely builded for the hosts that move
Through many windings to the height at last.
We lived our lives: and when the summons came,
Our rude but reverent sons assembling, laid
Us side by side within the cave—the same
Dim cave that held us living—all arrayed
As when in life. Then round about they set
Utensils of our dwelling, few but dear;
Crude-shapen gods and beaded amulet,
And in our hand the ready blade and spear;
That we might take our long untroubled rest,
And, when the wakening came (foretold
By haunting whispers of the secret breast),
Arise again as in the days of old,
Equipped and ready, even here perchance,
Within the precincts of our former home,
Frequented paths to traverse, or advance
To lands afar beyond the sunset foam.
Long ages rolled away. Fierce tribes of men
Abode and wandered near our lowly bed;
Succeeding monsters came and went again,
And left their whitening bones above our head.
But though the darkness had not wholly ceased,
Though still we lay in silent restful sleep,
No prying savage man nor prowling beast
Profaned the chamber of our slumber deep.
But now, when all with waking morning thrills,
And shadows fleet are sweeping to the west,

A Blossom of the Sea

When light is flushing all the eastern hills,
Unhallowed hands have broken on our rest.
The robe of clay, the panoply of dust
That Nature for the soul immortal weaves,
Is heartless left for every wandering gust
To scatter widely as the Sibyl's leaves.
Our graves their desecrating hands have marred,
And stolen all the treasures prized in life—
Our gods, the clustered beads, the flinty shard
We shaped with toil to arrow-head or knife.
Our bones they sever from enshrouding dust
And for a curious, gaping crowd retain,
Who in our eyes unfeeling fingers thrust,
Explore the caverned hollow of the brain;
The wasted relics of our frame compare
With those of ancient men of other lands,
Or even brutes that grovel in a lair,
Of mumbling, speechless lips and artless hands;
The lips that note of music never framed,
That never trembling with emotion prayed,
At rolling rhythmic numbers never aimed,
Nor raptured throngs to thrilling passion swayed;
The hands that never planted, tilled a field,
Nor built enduring shelter from the storm;
That never shaped a garment rude to shield
From cold and chilling blast the shrinking form;
The hands that never scooped a hollow grave
Nor reared memorial for a fallen mate;
The lips that never Sorrow comfort gave
With whispered vision of immortal state;

And Other Poems

The lips that never mellow sweetness blew
From sounding pipe amid the evening shade;
The hands that never lines of beauty drew,
Nor with enwoven rainbow colors played:
Dull brutes of thoughtless mind, as is their own,
Who, looking merely at the outward shape
And not the inward soul, so blind have grown
They cannot tell the man from blinking ape.
When comes the hour, ah, how shall we arise
Equipped and ready for the mighty change?
With what amaze shall we uncloseth our eyes
'Mid stranger faces in a dwelling strange!
Our scattered relics to the grave restore,
Replace the chaplet round the dreaming head,
Pollute our sacred resting-place no more,—
Will not the gods avenge the sleeping dead?
Are not the ashes of thy parents dead?
What bitter anguish thine, shouldst thou behold
A stranger rend the mound to grope and peer
For treasured keepsake 'mid their sacred mould,—
From faded hair to loose the clasping band,
The fallen eardrop from its dust to cull,
To snatch the circlet from the fleshless hand,
And set for ghastly show the grinning skull!
It makes the desecration none the less
Because a score of centuries have flown,
Because our sons may not the wrong redress,
Who too have slumbered countless years unknown.

A Blossom of the Sea

A granite tomb, whose ponderous iron gates
Display thy gilded titles deep enscrolled,
Upon a grassy slope of sunlight waits
Thy chambered ashes ever safe to hold:
But Time can cleave thy monumental stones
And gnaw the massy iron bars to rust;
The sun may whiten yet thy scattered bones,
And winds may strew the desert with thy dust.
Our lowly chamber then no more profane,
Restore to strengthless hand the precious blade,
Here let the beaded chaplet still remain
Upon the brow, by loving fingers laid;
Then smooth my bed and let me slumber on,
My bride enfolded to my pulseless breast.
And then when all that loved thee too are gone,
Secure mayst thou in vaulted chamber rest.

And Other Poems

SEMPER EADEM

[In the British Museum is the mummy of a little princess with a wooden doll still clasped in her arms.]

I N THE DIMNESS of ages agone,
Where the Nile water glimmered and flowed,
In a ponderous palace of stone
A dusk little princess abode.
Though gloomy and weird was the hall,
And frowning the huge colonnade,
A flutter of light seemed to fall
Wherever the little one strayed.
Her eyes had the darkness aglow
And the love of the springing gazelle;
Her voice was a dream-brook aflow
With an echo of silver-lipped bell.
The maiden was nimble and fleet
And graceful as moon-loving fay,
The fall of her diligent feet
As the patter of wind-fluttered spray.
She flitted like bird unconfined
Where columns colossal uprose,
Where sad-featured sphinxes reclined
In the strength of their stolid repose.
And ever with dusk little arms
A doll to her bosom she held,
And murmured its manifold charms
To the deaf granite monarchs of eld.

A Blossom of the Sea

And oft as she prattled and played,
A queen-mother's amorous eyes
From dark drooping lashes betrayed
A languorous gleam of surprise.

Though pillared with ponderous stone,
Yet Death through the palace gate crept;
At the touch of his magic unknown
The maiden grew languid and slept.
The queen-mother bent o'er the maid,
Her dark lashes drooping with tears
As the form she composed and arrayed
For the silence and slumber of years.
The doll she had loved and caressed
And every heart-secret had told
Was pillowed again on her breast,
Enclasped with the fervor of old.
One earth-love, at least, would be nigh,
Though near her no mother might stand
To answer her wakening cry
In the halls of the Shadowy Land.

The days have now lengthened to years,
The years into ages have grown,
The sphinx-guarded palace uprears
No longer its masses of stone;
The huge, granite column sublime
Is fallen or crumbled to naught;
But Ruin and ravaging Time
No change in the sleeper have wrought.

And Other Poems

She sleeps as she slumbered of old
When she peacefully sank to her rest,
And the dusk little fingers yet hold
The mother's gift close to her breast.
Does she wait for a low-whispered tone,
The touch of a soft-resting hand,
The pressure of lips on her own
Ere she wake in the Shadowy Land?

O Sleeper of breathless repose,
Thy slumber is restful and long,
Thy lips will no secret disclose
Of the Land where the Silences throng.
Yet, speechless and still as thou art,
Thou teachest that kingdoms may wane,
But the longings and loves of the heart
Forever unaltered remain.
We must love: to the earthly we turn,
For the earthly is near us and fair;
In our heaven no joy we discern
If the loved of the earth be not there.
The heart, in all ages the same,
Will worship at altars of clay,
But shudder and shrink when the flame
Has flickered and faded away.
Forever the same is the heart,
And firm and unshaken its trust
That Death does not finally part,
Nor man ever slumber in dust.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE QUEEN

I SAW her when the midnight summons came
That called her from a maiden's happy sleep
To all the cares and glories of a throne,
When, through the trembling tears, her eyes revealed
Her childhood resolution "to be good."

I saw her at the bridal altar stand,
Unfettered by "conveniences of State,"
And link her hand—where Love had linked her heart—
To one whose heart made music to her own,
Whose hand alike had skill in kindly deeds.

I saw, when children played around her knee,
She ne'er forgot the *mother* in the *queen*;
But, in their busy simple ways of life,
She taught their early lips her love of truth,
Their feet the path to Duty and to God.

I saw her when the sudden Herald came,
Who claims the best from hut or princely hall.
She bowed her queenly head in human woe,
Then, unforgetful of the bitter smart,
Resumed the doubled weight of life, alone.

And Other Poems

I saw, from wider realm than ever bowed
To ancient Rome in her imperial day,
Her thronging sons assemble round her throne
And, with a freeman's fervent homage, greet
The peerless queen, who, thrice a score of years,
Had built her surest empire in their hearts.
They came from mapled slopes, from burning Ind,
From Afric plain and ocean isles afar—
Not terror-driven by a victor dread
Whose chariot rims were dripping with the gore
Of millions trampled under iron heels,
But love-impelled by one that drew them nigh,
As teacher of the gentle arts of peace,
As model queen, who wore a mother's heart
That beat or throbbed at human joy or woe.
What marvel that the fount of feeling broke,
And that her eyes with grateful tears were dim,
To find the task of weary years approved
By all the myriads of her ample realm!

I saw her when the reverent world stood hushed,
And silent waited for the coming stroke
That cleft the links of earth, and set her free
To join the lost companion of her youth
Who long had waited on the Hills of Morn.

What richer meed has mortal ever won?
She leaves the realm the better for her reign,
The home the purer for her blameless life,

A Blossom of the Sea

The sceptre brighter for her stainless hand.
The bell of Time has rung the hour of rest;
She calmly lays the robe and sceptre down
And sinks to deep repose. Her task is done,
Her childhood promise kept—she has been “good”:
The Lord has therefore given length of days.
And now, when all the millions of the earth
Have thrice approved the glories of her life,
She fearless waits the judgment of her God.

January, 1901.

And Other Poems

REX MORTUUS EST, TAMEN VIVIT

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be
called the children of God."*

BUT LATE we bowed and wept his mother's loss;
Too soon his feet have trod her way of death;
His promise was to follow in her steps;
Too faithfully has he that promise kept
And followed where her steps no more return.
Achilles chose a short, eventful life,
And sought and won his fame by warlike deeds:
Eventful too and brief was Edward's reign,
But he has won a richer meed of praise
By wisely guiding hostile lands to sheathe
The eager sword and doff the brazen helm.
The only monarch since the dawn of Time
To walk supreme and win the world's applause
Yet be in thought and deed a Prince of Peace;
And therefore shall they call our Edward blest
And name him with the children of our God.

Britannia's ancient foe, ambitious Gaul,
Won by his wise and gentle words, now stands
Unhelmeted, a brother by her side.
And he who wields an iron sceptre o'er
The hosts diverse of Europe's widest realm

A Blossom of the Sea

Abates his wrath at touch of Edward's hand.
And even he whose restless spirit keeps
In ferment Europe, seemingly has found
In milder counsels truer wisdom lies,
And holds in check his martial hosts awhile.
The alien foes that battled fierce and long
On native veldt forget the bitter feud,
And, yielding to his wish, unite and meet
Where Boer and Briton counsel side by side.
Won by his genial heart and proffered hand,
Across the sea a kindred, once estranged,
Warmed by the thrill of common Saxon blood,
Revere a man that was a king indeed,
And closer draw the bonds of brotherhood.

The truest and the best beloved of kings
Whether at home or in the realms abroad ;
Preserver of all dignity and grace,
Discreetly wise, discerning well the hour
To speak, and speaking then the fitting word,
Regardful of his office high, full well
His dying lips may tell of duty done.

Dwelling unrivaled in his people's hearts,
He freely walked among his own, nor feared
The stealthy dagger of a lurking foe.
Above all faction strife exalted high
He held the balance with an even hand ;
Nor he the target for the bitter shafts
Shot from the bows of venal pamphleteers,

And Other Poems

Nor victim of the dastardly cartoons,
Degrading to the office and the land,
Subversive of respect and reverence.
A democratic king that lived and thought
And labored only for his people's good,
Bowed with his weight of care, yet to the last
Regardful of his duty—such a king,
And such a reign, to all the world attest
The wisdom, garnered for a thousand years.
That reared on Britain's isle a stately throne
And placed a sceptre in a kingly hand—
The surest pledge of stable government;
A kingdom, yet a true democracy,
Where, though the people rule, a king may reign
And toil and serve all his allotted days.

From graceful pine a pine alone can spring,
From fragrant roses naught but roses grow—
Son of a sire, as patron of the Arts
And Sciences, beloved and honored yet
Though half a busy century has fled,
Son of a mother who, although a queen,
Was yet a queen of mothers, who, in heart
Snow-pure, kept all her court unstained—
Of such a mother and of such a sire
A worthy son has England's Edward been.

The pledge he gave the nation he has kept;
He loved his own and loved them to the end,
And for them labored to his latest breath.

A Blossom of the Sea

No more can mortal claim than duty done.
Man among men, king among kings he stood;
Now, summoned from us to a higher throne,
He waits the judgment of the King of kings.

And Other Poems

AMBITION AND PRAISE

"I charge thee Cromwell, fling away ambition."

AMBITION fling thou not away,
Except the baser kind;
Nay, rather strive to bring in play
All virtues of thy mind.
'Tis both the duty and the right
Of every earnest man
To mark afar the distant height
And reach it if he can.
Let not a talent buried lie;
Swift follow Thought with Deed,
For winged life is flitting by
And instant is the need.
Awaken every dormant power,
Its fullest service give;
Relax not till the latest hour,
Life's every moment live.
With dauntless energy of soul
Each nerve unwearied strain
To reach the very farthest goal
Thy genius may attain.
If thou outrun the foremost van,
Relinquish not the strife;

A Blossom of the Sea

For he is nearest perfect man
That makes the most of life.
If honest lips with praise reward
Thy honest word or deed,
Contemn it not, nor disregard,—
Accept it as thy meed.
Too seldom far a noble fame
A noble life repays;
Too many are the lips that blame,
Too few that utter praise.
If in our purer thoughts we trust
Some merit God may see,
The praises of the good or just
Unfitting cannot be.
Then seek deserts of honest worth
By honest judgment given;
Who wins the praises of the earth
May win the praise of Heaven.

March, 1900.

And Other Poems

OUR CITY COUSIN

SHE leaves the city dust and heat
To walk among our meadows sweet,
'Neath Gothic arms of elms to stray
And couch amid the waving grass,
To watch the lights and shadows play
On dimpled waters as they pass,
That hastening over pebbled ways
In gurgling tones of gladness praise
The circling grove of cedars cool
That shade their home, the glassy pool.

The morning clouds of changeful hue
Were isles afloat in seas of blue.
She saw afar in sunset sky,
Enwrapt in soft and fleecy fold,
The angel children dreaming lie
On purple pillows fringed with gold;
She saw the noontide shadows deep
Like ghosts across the meadow sweep,
And shining chargers swift pursue
O'er hill and dale till lost to view.

For her the winds in billows rolled
Our ripened wheat as molten gold

A Blossom of the Sea

Or lightly touched the crested oats
That lay like level seas between,
Or swayed each tasseled staff that floats
On isles of maize the streamers green;
Our groves were homes for prayer and thought,
Whose very hush and silence wrought
A tone of sweetness never heard
In fluted strain or spoken word.

The minstrels of the dawn would meet
To break with song her slumber sweet;
The horses listen for her tread,
And curve the glossy neck and stand
With pointed ear and nostril spread
To win caress of silken hand;
The lowing kine assembled all
When summoned by her ringing call,
And gazed with dark and dreamy eyes
Where love was mingled with surprise.

The fruits and blossoms on the farm
Had each for her a novel charm:
The berry dwelt in hamlet green,
With streets that wound in tangled maze,
Where faces rose from leafy screen
In clustered groups to peer and gaze;
The sumach torches held aglow,
The cherry bending branches low
Extended tinted finger-tips

And Other Poems

To dye in deeper red her lips.
The vine a leafy hammock hung
By airy finger lightly swung;
To catch her gown the roses leant,—

Their clinging hands her step delayed,
But while the head in blushes bent,
The honeyed lip excuses made;
A fairy music seemed to dwell
In Morning Glory's swinging bell,
And snowy lilies of the shade
In tiny tones a tinkling made.

Yet amply too the city maid
The country cheer to us repaid;
Her motions had the airy grace
And fleetness of the woodland fawn;
A light seemed breaking o'er her face
That promised ever brighter dawn;
The touches of her dainty hand
Had magic of a wizard's wand,
For where her busy fingers wrought
They all to ordered beauty brought.

To ornament our barren rooms
Her pencil imaged clustered blooms,
Or dreamy, shadow-haunted nooks
Where dusky twilight ever dwells,
Or grassy banks and winding brooks
Where herds had hushed their clanging bells.

A Blossom of the Sea

Her dainty fingers garments shaped
In simple, artful beauty draped,
Where needle traced the graceful line
Of tinted leaf and trailing vine.

When softly glowed the twilight star
She told us tales of lands afar,
Or sang us songs that hushed the heart
 To all the calm of eventide,
In low, rich tones, till tears would start
 That smiling lip could hardly hide;
And when the keys her fingers swept,
Such rapture o'er our senses crept
That in our dreams the tones we heard
Of tinkling rill and piping bird.

Or oft some ballad would she read
That prompted breast to noble deed;
Or lyric lay of sweet content
 That made some lowly heart divine;
Yet to the thought her reading lent
 An added charm to every line;
For when she read and when she sung,
A richness dwelt upon her tongue
That every bosom thrilled and stirred
To rapture at the poet's word.

And Other Poems

She sat where orchard gold and shade
Upon her loosened tresses played—
The tree took from its yellow hoard
An apple which the fragrant sap
With treasures of a year had stored,
And flung it lightly in her lap—
Then I who loved her dearly too,
My offering of devotion threw,
A heart with true affection rife,
The gathered treasures of my life.

And thus the cheery city maid
Has in our country cottage stayed;
For here beside me now she stands.
My bride of twenty years ago:
There still is magic in her hands,
As I and all the neighbors know;
Their touch is balm for every pain
Of saddened heart or fevered brain,
They still can deftly touch the string
Or home to ordered beauty bring.

The sounds and sights upon the farm
For her have never lost their charm:
For mystic notes pervade the air
And o'er the quiet spirit steal,
And forms of beauty everywhere
Their ever changing shades reveal;
The herds at pasture each and all

A Blossom of the Sea

Will come in answer to her call,
And fondly still around her press
To share her silken hand's caress.

And all the neighbors feel as well
Her presence casts a fairy spell:
Like hers, have grown their dwellings bright;
 Serenity shines the morning sun,
And Duty feels the burden light
 When Beauty's feet before her run;
A pure ray the breast inflames
With sweeter joys and higher aims;
Their fruitful lands a charm disclose
And bud and blossom as the rose.

And Other Poems

A CHILD'S QUESTION

MOTHER, tell me what is death,"
Said my little maid to-day,
Coming from a neighbor home
Where her playmate silent lay.
"When we die, we journey far
Past remotest shining star,
Onward to a distant gate
Where eternal mansions wait."

"Mother, tell me what is death,
Bertha is not gone away,
For I saw her clad in flowers
Lying on her couch to-day."
"Death is like a slumber deep
When the weary soundly sleep,
Where no passing vision stands
Haunting with its shadow hands."

"Mother, tell me what is death—
Bertha is not sleeping now;
She is cold, and did not wake
When I bent and kissed her brow."
"Long that slumber is and deep;
Ere she wakens from her sleep
In the arms of earth she must
Mingle with her kindred dust."

A Blossom of the Sea

"Mother, tell me what is death.

If in dust my Bertha lies,
How can she awake or dwell
Far beyond the glowing skies?"

"Bertha's *form* alone will sleep:
This will earth enfolding keep;
But her *soul* is gone afar
Past remotest shining star."

"Mother, tell me what is death.

More and more obscure it grows.
What is this you call *the soul*?

Tell me *where* and *how* it goes."

"Child, I know not what is death.
Bosom void of heaving breath—
Changeless pallor of the cheek—
Hueless lips that will not speak—
Hands that clasp not as of old—
Lids that nevermore unfold.
These I see, but cannot tell
How is wrought the sudden spell.

"What we mortals call the soul

Comprehends no human mind;

Best we know its presence here

From the blank it leaves behind.

O the transformation vast

When the viewless guest has passed,

Taking all that wins and thrills,

Dimpling blush and warm caress,—

And Other Poems

Leaving what repels and chills,
Pallor, cold and nothingness.

"All the noble, great and good
Since the dawning hour of Time,
All the hordes in homeless wood,
Arctic wild or torrid clime,
In the lonely silent hour
When this viewless guest has power
Faintly hear an inner voice,
Constant as a distant wave,
Whisper of an endless life
And a land beyond the grave.

"In the silent midnight hour,
When the things of sense depart,
When the inward listening ear
Hears the beating of the heart,
In the hush I too have heard
Solemn tone and mystic word
Chanted by the hidden guest
In the chamber of my breast.

"I, upon the summit won
In our struggling slow advance,
Through the mist of elder days
Turn and cast a backward glance.
Down the pathways of the Past
Comes the beating tramp of men
Sweeping o'er the levels vast,
Thronging mountain steep and glen:

A Blossom of the Sea

Ruddy youth with sturdy tread,
Wrinkled age with bowing head,
Ordered hosts and scattered hordes,
Pressing to the fatal fords.
Though they shudder, pause and shrink,
Yet, when trembling on the brink,
All expectant look before
For the viewless father shore,
Whence, perchance, a distant gleam
Breaks afar across the stream.

"Since through all the maze of years
From the early dawn of Time,
Crouching slave and sceptered lord,
Born of every age and clime,—
Since the millions of the past
Have, until their latest breath,
Trusted in a world that lies
Just beyond the fords of death,—
Since I hear this inward voice
Whisper of the life to be,—
Since to every mortal born
Comes the whisper as to me,—
I believe the soul exists,
Though its form I cannot see;
I believe in world afar,
Past remotest shining star.
But, my maiden, what is death.
What the misty waters hide,
You nor I shall ever know
Till we cross the darkened tide."

And Other Poems

ON A DOG BURIED IN HIS MASTER'S CLOAK

ME, WHEN yet the dawning light
Scarce had broken on my sight,
Clad in sable silken coat,
Home my future master bore:
Snowy ermine at my throat,
Glossy, wavy locks I wore.
When, of playful kin bereaved,
I with plaintive whimper grieved,
Loving tone and soft caress
Banished all my loneliness.

Him to love I early learned,
For his constant presence yearned;
Swift his bidding I obeyed,
Fetched and carried at command,
Amplly happy if repaid
With caresses from his hand.
Watchful o'er his little child,
All his infant cares beguiled—
Winter cold nor summer heat
Ever stayed my willing feet.

Trusty guardian I lay
Near his portal night and day.

A Blossom of the Sea

When his coming step I heard
With a hearty welcome hied,
Never missing kindly word,
Pacing proudly at his side.
For he loved me living; shed
Tears of pity o'er me dead.
In his mantle close enrolled
Here I slumber in the mould.

Earnest mortal pause and ask,
"Hast thou done thy Master's task?
Hast thou kept His home, thy heart,
Safely guarded night and day?
Listened for His tread, to dart
Forth to meet Him on the way?
Hast thou on His errands fared,
For His feeble children cared?
Then, in mantle from His breast
Closely folded thou shalt rest."

December, 1898.

And Other Poems

A VIEW OF DEATH

WITHIN a vale of darksome depths, where rolled
A maze of cloudy vapor, foul and dank,
I met a shadow pale. Beneath the cold
And steely terror of his gaze I shrank;
A winter chilled the chamber of my heart;
I trembled at his cruel, threatening brow
And fleshless fingers poising jagged dart;
I cried with hollow voice, "Oh, what art thou?"

"Men call me Death," the pallid spectre said,
"And all their fear and horror may devise,
At my approach they shudder in their dread;
And yet I am a friend, though in disguise.
I take the aged when the eye is dim
To all the charms of earth, when dull the ear
To all its wondrous music, when the limb
No more the shaking form may bear, when dear
And tender friends have wandered now
Adown the vale of years beyond recall;
I close awhile the eye, the wrinkled brow
I smooth to restful peace, and bear them all
To waken tearless in the Happy Isles
Where skies are cloudless blue, where ceaseless flow
The fountains of immortal youth, and smiles
Of greeting come from friends of long ago.

A Blossom of the Sea

"Steel-sinewed men, hard toiling at their task
From dawn to dark, till shoulders bend and bow
As though with weight of years, and wrinkles mask
With stolid lines the youthful lip and brow,
Who see no dawning through the darkness loom,
Nor ever star a transient gleaming throw
Upon the desert, black, devoid of bloom,
Where Youth is endless toil, and Age is woe,—
These oft I bear away on sudden wing,
And in a moment ope their weary eyes
On lands of rest and blossoms sweet, that bring
The glow and gladness of a first surprise.

"The happy maiden, flushed with joy and health.
While loving friends unnumbered round her throng,
Whose path is strewn with all the gifts of Wealth
And brightened with the strains of morning song,
I still to sleep with perfumed opiate,
Afar convey on noiseless pinion swift,
Where at the parted agate portal wait
The daughters of the angels. As they lift
The veils of slumber from her dreaming face,
They kiss her lip and cheek to wonted glow,
Unloose her braided hair, then interlace
Her form with twining arms, and straying go,
In converse low, across the happy fields,
By drooping waters, opal-palaced streams.
And pathways of a paradise that yields
A joy beyond the fairest of our dreams.

And Other Poems

"The pure, unblemished blossom, angel-borne
From gardens of our God,—before the fire
Of noon has blighted, or the blast has torn,
Or heedless feet have crushed it in the mire
Till tender head may nevermore uplift,
Nor slender stem, nor waxen petals fair,
But blacken into shapeless dust and drift,—
I raise and back to Heaven's garden bear.
The babe, who : lips but lisp the early word,
Upon the gateway verge of garnet stands
With fair white feet,—the curls of amber stirred
By nectared winds, the little beck'ning hands
Outstretched, the eyes expectant peering through
A depth of blue less clear than is their own.
It sends a voice—the earthly voice, yet, too,
Enriched and sweetened to a seraph tone—
Far past the shining flight of floating spheres,
In ever fainting echoes ringing on,
Until at last the list'ning mother hears
The pleading call as in the days agone,
And lifts her eyes, long drooped and drowned with
tears,
In glad surprise, and comes with willing feet
Her child among the garden walks to meet
And share the gladness of the endless years."

I raised my eyes. The valley depths were bright
With all the glory of a springing dawn;
I saw a shining Angel of the Light,
Whose hand had just the veil of Heav'n withdrawn.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE DESERTED HOUSE

MY FRIEND'S deserted home I passed:
The portal wide was open thrown,
Across the thresho'd snows were blown
And heaped by every vagrant blast;
Within, a dainty hand had cast
A counterpane of whitest wool
And eider pillows fluffed and full.

Ah! once from out that open door
My friend came hasting forth to meet
The faintest murmur of my feet.
I here shall see her face no more;
Her bark is launched to reach a shore
Whence, of the myriads that have crossed,
None re-embark, or all are lost.

They sail a never-changing tide
That ever ebbs but never flows,
Where never wind but outward blows,
Where inbound vessels never ride.
As far in misty glooms they glide
We gaze with unavailing tears
And sighs that never reach their ears.

And Other Poems

But whither flows the changeless tide,
And whither blows the steady gale,
What seas unknown their barks may sail,
What isles of green they have descried,
The misty glooms forever hide
From us, who watch, our vision strain
To pierce the blinding mist, in vain.

Why may they not recross the stream?
Why never comes returning sail
To bear our yearning hearts the tale
Of lands whereof we catch a gleam
But far and faint? Or, do we dream
Of shady groves and fragrant leas
On restful isles in summer seas?

And does the onward current sweep
Their vessels to the sudden verge
Of yawning swirls of foaming surge
And shroud them in Lethean deep?
Or, do they, ever homeless, creep
O'er seas unknown and ever tossed,
In blinding glooms perplexed and lost?

O'erhung by clouds without a rift,
Embarking in a shallop frail
With unaccustomed oar and sail,
Amid the mists that never lift
Must each adown the current drift:

A Blossom of the Sea

No lip shall else the secret learn,
What lies beyond no eyes discern.

Her bark perchance hath cleft the gloom
And, sliding into purple sea,
Hath touched a land of level lea
And limpid stream, where planets loom
O'er palm-empillared banks of bloom:
She there, as erst, beside the gate
May now my early coming wait.

What beacon then shall thither guide?
For if alone, when I embark,
I ever thread the maze of dark
And never, never reach her side,—
If I with her may not abide,
I care not what abyss may keep
Me whelmed forgotten fathoms deep.

And Other Poems

TO MIRIAM

I.

O DAINTY, fairy Miriam,
I cannot deem thee gone,
But as of old thy loving heart
To neighbor dwelling drawn.

Awaiting here thy swift return
I hear thy tripping feet,
I see thy glad uplifted eyes
Aglow with welcome sweet.

In vain, alas, in vain I wait
And long thy face to see,
For thou to me wilt not return,
But I shall go to thee.

If He that holds of Life and Death
The keys in loving hands
Should open wide the shining gates
Where each in glory stands,

And freely offer me the choice
To leave or take at will,
My heart would leap to claim its own:
My heart is human still.

A Blossom of the Sea

II.

Within thy distant mansion dwell
No kindred thou hast known,
And all its unfamiliar ways
Thy feet must tread alone.

O mother, in that world afar
Long entered on thy rest,
Whose whisper dried my early tear
When cradled on thy breast,

O meet my lonely little one
In yonder world of bliss,
Bestow on her the care and love
Thou gavest me in this.

O take her by the little hand
So often laid in mine,
And guide her unaccustomed feet
To meet the Friend divine.

III.

I wonder where thy home may be
In yonder realm afar;
I see thee bask on rosy cloud,
Or peer from limpid star.

And Other Poems

I see the imprint of thy feet
In every glowing sky
Thy whisper hear in every breeze
That steals reluctant by.

In every note of piping bird
That greets the flushing dawn
I hear again the cheery tones
Of happy days ago.

And when by evening's cooling breath
My troubled brow is fanned,
I feel again the mute caress
Of lingering loving hand.

Dost thou, as ever, hover near
To comfort hearts that grieve?
Or do again my erring sense
And yearning breast deceive?

IV.

What new and dainty beauties now
Thy heart and hand employ,
That found in pretty things of earth
Their one enduring joy?

Dost thou frequent the fragrant meads
Where freshest blooms abound,
And garlands weave on shadowed banks
By rills of dreamy sound?

A Blossom of the Sea

What rapture and surprise are thine
Amid the ardent throng,
When breaks on thy delighted ear
The primal seraph song?

Are yet thy darling lips attuned
To chant the glad refrain,
Or do they still a note reveal
Of earthly love and pain?

Dost thou ne'er come when wide the gates
Their crystal bars unfold
And earthward cast a longing glance
To all the loved of old?

V.

I cannot deem with earthly days
Thy little life is o'er,
That all thy gentle, pretty ways
Are lost forevermore.

Though Science teach that future life
Is but a yawning void,
It still maintains whate'er exists
May never be destroyed.

If energy can never cease,
But merely suffer change,
This fettered life may find release
And wider regions range.

And Other Poems

Though flame extinguished by the blast
To us may seem to die,
Its vital breath has only passed
To mingle with the sky.

Though broken stem and withered leaf
May lie upon the ground,
The flower's fragrant soul has fled
Beyond the azure round.

The taper by the breath outblown
May be relit again;
The wave upborne on vapor wings
May redescend in rain.

Then rob me not of that wherein
My only comfort lies,—
That life shall find a fuller life
Beyond the morning skies.

If this my dearest hope be vain,
If earthy life be all,
Then hasten, Death, to dim my lamp
And drop thy darkest pall.

VI.

Canst thou with new immortal powers
Thy fuller life has brought
Outspeed the lightnings of the sun,
Outwing the fleetest thought?

A Blossom of the Sea

Canst thou explore the bounds of space,
Or sweep the planet's round,
Unveil the dim remotest sphere
In azure deeps profound?

Canst thou with clearness comprehend,
Unclogged by mortal breath,
The hidden mysteries of Life,
This darker one of Death?

Canst thou discern how Earth and Heaven
Are linked by viewless chain,
And yet thy early entrance there
Can rend this heart with pain?

VII.

What constitutes the lasting joy
Of thy abode supreme
Whose bliss eternal so transcends
Our wildest mortal dream?

Does he that moulds the flaming sphere,
And wheels it through the sky,
Unaided shape the silken bud
And blend its dainty dye?

Or, since the *busy* hand alone
Can *here* enjoyment find,
Has He each reawakened soul
A fitting task assigned?

And Other Poems

Who drapes in mist the mountain's brow
Or swathes in purple fold?
Who piles aloft the castled clouds
And builds their roofs of gold?

What hand directs the reinless winds
Or guides the maddened storms?
Who flings to earth the floating flakes
And braids their crystal forms?

Who shapes the seed and heaps the store
About its tiny germ,
And re-awakes its dormant life
At the appointed term?

Who guides the upward growth to grace,
The snow-lipped chalice moulds,
And pours into the luscious deeps
Empurpled pinks and golds?

To me the violet of the grove
Is dearer for the thought
With dainty touch thy spirit hands
Its beauties may have wrought.

All tasks may reach accomplishment
In such serene employ,
Where Death no more may still the hand
Nor Time its works destroy;

A Blossom of the Sea

Where brooding Thought has ample scope
And undisturbed retreat;
Where string of lute is never broke
Nor song left incomplete.

VIII.

There's not a leisured moment wings
This realm of Time across
But on its passing pinions brings
Reminders of thy loss.

I miss thee when the wings of Dawn
Their glory flashes fling,
That brought thy step and morning kiss,
And nevermore will bring.

And when around the evening board
Our heads are bowed in prayer,
I miss the little earnest lips
That named "Our Father" there.

I miss thee when the clouds of gloom
O'erdarken as the night,
And through involving darkness breaks
No single beam of light;

When up to brazen skies I lift
In vain my pleading eyes,
When even God seems dead, or deaf
To all my pleading cries.

And Other Poems

IX.

I find in this a kind of strength
My sorrow to endure;
That He that gave thee pure at first
Received thee back as pure;

That o'er the tender lilled meads
Thy path has ever lain,
And dusts of earth upon thy feet
Have left no evil stain;

That o'er thy little silent breast
The grasses grow so green;
That Autumn drops so gently down
Her tinted leafy screen;

That passing winds of Winter hush
Their wails to whispers low,
And spread with tender, silent hands
Their softest veils of snow;

That o'er the Hills of Morning, Spring
Will steal with noiseless tread,
And wreath in vine and violet
Thy little lonely bed;

That far beyond the Hills of Morn
Thou dost expectant wait
To greet me with thy wonted joy
When coming soon or late.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE SNOW

ALL DAY leaden vapors had lowered,
The wind whistled dismal and low,
Till mingled with Night's darkest pinions
Came swirling the white-winged snow.

The lingering blossoms of summer,
The last and the latest that bloomed,
Their lips with the life-flushes tinted,
The quick with the dead were entombed.

The vine that imploringly lifted
Meek hands to the pitiless skies,
Where deepest the billows are drifted,
Low-buried and smothering lies.

The leaf that had flaunted defiant
Its flag in the face of the blast,
All stained with its heart-blood is lying
Enshrouded and silent at last.

There clovers and delicate mosses
In whitest of cerements are wound,
But oh, unto *my* heart the dearest
Is one little turf-woven mound.

For there under late-growing grasses,
Where evergreen branches droop low,
With hands laid to rest on her bosom
My darling sleeps under the snow.

And Other Poems

WHITBY LADIES' COLLEGE

LO A DREAM of stately beauty
Stands upon a gentle height
Where a gleam of azure waters
Never fades upon the sight.
In the hush of moonlit splendor
Echoes faint the ear will reach
As the feet of busy breakers
Patter on the pebbled beach.
Thence the early morning breezes
Fan a freshness from their wings,
And the shadow-mantled evening
Such a grateful coolness brings
That to eye it gives a lustre
And to lip a ruddy wealth,
While the cheek of Beauty flushes
With the glow of perfect health.
Where it crowns the pleasant hilltop,
Where its halls in slumber lie
First the Angels of the Morning
From their glowing mansions fly;
On its ample roofs alighting
They their shining pinions fold
While they deck it as an altar
In the richest "cloth of gold."
As their jeweled hands are draping
Window, parapet and wall,

A Blossom of the Sea

Flying glints and gleams of glory
On the lawn in flashes fall,—
Veils, of quivering threads enwoven,
From their amber chambers brought,
Shimmering on the grassy carpet,
Velvet-green and pearl-enwrought—
Hands of Midas, softly touching
Maples lifting lofty heads
Till a gold of mellow radiance
All their branches overspreads.
Long the sun of evening lingers,
And with love his fingers rest
As he flames it with a glory
Ere he leaves the ruddy West.
When the night is o'er it bending
Then a paler splendor falls
That in folds of silk and silver
Wraps the silence of the walls,
Flinging flecks of light and shadow
Where each faithful sentry stands
Clad in Lincoln green, and pointing
With his warning taper hands,
Where the stealthy winds have stolen
'Mid the sleepers on the lawn,
Blossom breasts of hoards to rifle
Treasured for the crimson Dawn.
In this pleasant mansion Learning
Stands in waiting to unfold
All the treasures that the ages
In their ample temples hold:

And Other Poems

Art, with dainty brush and palette,
And with heaven-lifted face,
Stands expectant, fleeting shadows
In unfading lines to trace;
Music waits, with skilful finger
Ready laid upon the string,
Magic floods of melting rapture
On the fragrant air to fling;
Here Devotion walks with Duty,
And the mind is early taught
That we find the highest pleasure
In the world of Work and Thought.

Blessings on the heart that planned it
And the hand that wrought it well,
For in halls of beauty only
Should the form of Beauty dwell.
Where she walks the way of Wisdom
Art and Nature both should meet,
And assembling all their treasure
Lay the off'ring at her feet.
These will mould her *heart* to beauty,
And the heart will mould the face,
And a mind and soul accordant
Give the form an added grace,
Till her life shall beam with beauty
And the happy world divine
That the forms are ever fairest
That the fairest soul enshrine.

1897.

A Blossom of the Sea

A BLOSSOM OF THE SEA

THE trampling hosts had come, and all the night
In massive squadrons clad in gleaming steel,
With waving flags and tossing plumes of white,
Had rushed with thousand thundering feet, and peal
Of demon laughter, on the giant rocks
That stood in stern array, in harness black,
Unyielding met the oft-repeated shocks
And hurled them reeling, rearing, plunging back.
Above the battle's deafening roar and crash
Loud shrieks and muttered groans arose
As every rolling rank would onward dash
But fall and flounder at the feet of foes.
The beaten hosts confusedly withdrew,
Defeated as in myriad fights before,
But scattering, fled to gather strength anew,
And left the stolid victors on the shore.
Aside the moon her floating curtain bound
And peered in silence at the fleeing host,
With silver tipped each tattered crest, and crowned
In gleaming helms the guardians of the coast.
The morning came. His early beams looked down
On wearied chargers deep with crimson dyed,
And giants grim who still with sullen frown,
And brow with purple gashed, the foe defied.

And Other Poems

The storm had ceased. Around the sheltered bay
The little town awoke again to life,
And many a snowy canvas swept away
Across the waves yet angry from their strife.
The fishermen beheld on every side
The wreckage of some stranded ship afloat;
The broken masts were scattered far and wide,
And, helpless on the waves, a tossing boat.
The surges to and fro their burden rolled—
A wounded sailor, down unconscious cast,
Whose hands yet clenched the broken oars that told
Of desperate struggle with the frenzied blast.
A mother, too, whose lifeless arms embraced
A babe that slumbered snugly wrapped and warm,
About whose form her garments she had placed
And left her own half-naked to the storm.
The fishermen in breathless wonder gazed,
Then, turning, quickly drew the boat to land,
And, stooping low, the senseless beings raised
And bore them home with tender, loving hand.

The babe uninjured from its dream awoke;
But not its prattle, nor the kisses pressed
By baby lips, nor touch of baby fingers, broke
The silent slumber of the mother's breast.
Nor e'er returned the sailor's consciousness;
But oft he rose, when tossing in his pain,
And cheered the mother in her deep distress,
Then fiercely fought his battle o'er again.

A Blossom of the Sea

At last, as o'er the ocean broke the day,
He started from his couch in wild surprise
And shouted, "Land!" then lifeless sank and lay
With look of rest and gladness in his eyes.
The people gathered from the village round—
Their bronzed faces wet with streaming tears—
And laid them where had risen many a mound
For ocean victims in the passing years.

O kindly is the Sea when skies are fair,
And slumber all the passions of the breast;
The sailor's bark in love he seems to bear
To summer-harbored, fragrant isles of rest.
Then cradled in his softly swaying arms
One evermore in dreamy bliss may lie,
Where not a breath e'er startles or alarms
The drowsy cloud slow floating in the sky.
O cheering is the Sea when breezes fill
The swelling sail and fling the whirling spray
And send through every tingling nerve a thrill,
As glides the vessel swiftly on her way.
O cruel and inconstant is the Sea:
When rage and frenzy swell his savage breast,
He tosses high, down dashes ruthlessly
What he so late had cradled and caressed.
With Giant hands the creaking mast he bends
And smites with mighty blows the shrinking ships,
Their bruised and battered sides he rudely rends
With savage howl and frenzy-foaming lips;

And Other Poems

Or drives them crashing on the craggy shore
And shatters them with oft-repeated shocks,
As with defiant shout and demon roar
He tramples out their life among the rocks.

Though oft they sought among the towns around,
Inquiries none about the mother came.
But on the garment of the child they found,
By skilful fingers broidered there, a name.
The name was "Baby Jessie"; and no more
The little lips could tell; nor ascertained
They whence the vessel stranded on their shore;
And so the orphan child with them remained.
Though loving memories in her bosom slept,
And in her dreams a presence lingered long,
In time the lonely one no longer wept
For mother's kiss and mother's cradle song.
For Helen Bain, whose heart dwelt in her face,
Had taken Baby Jessie as her own.
And soon her winning way and girlish grace
Had made her well in every cottage known.
From her they named her "Jessie Bain"; but oft
When breezes, racing o'er the waves in glee,
Had flushed her rounded cheek with tinting soft,
The little maid was "Blossom of the Sea."

With merry feet she tripped through Babyland,
Where all is bright to new-awakened eyes
That see the beauties fresh on every hand
Beneath the glow of yet unclouded skies;

A Blossom of the Sea

Where every breeze a fragrant burden brings
From laden blooms that, glowing, never fade,
And every note is flung from gleeful strings
Where Sorrow's languid hand was never laid.

In Childhood Land she ran with nimble feet
Her little busy round of school and play—
A bee that everywhere was gathering sweet
And storing by against the future day.
Glad-footed years went swiftly gliding by,
And silent wove the veils they ever cast
O'er all the fair and lovely forms that lie
Enshrined by memory in the shrouded past,
Till, one by one, a filmy mantle hides
Or dims them all. Years flitted till she stood
Upon the verge where Childhood's pathway glides
Unconscious into that of Womanhood.
The Springs of coming womanhood had told,
The Summers tinged her cheek with bloom of rose,
The Autumns on her tresses left their gold,
The Winters bathed her brow in purest snows.
The dwellers in the woodland where she strayed
Were joyous when they spied her drawing near
And freely yielded to the rambling maid
Whatever treasure each regarded dear;—
The lily gave her form its slenderness,
The ripple lent her voice its music sweet,
The breezes touched her locks with fond caress
And whispered of their lightly-treading feet.

And Other Poems

These fisher people rugged features wore,
For generations bronzed by wind and spray,
And shoulders bent and broadened by the oar
Their sturdy arms had wielded day by day.
With speeding years they saw the maiden now
Resemble more and more that slender form
With cloud of golden hair and angel brow
That saved her babe but perished in the storm.
To them this cheek 'mid apple blossoms born,
This eye that beamed with blue of heaven's dome,
These streaming locks like early rays of morn,
This breast and brow as white as tossing foam,
This loving heart where gifts and treasures rare
Were in profusion lavish known to lie,—
To them she seemed a creature of the air—
A blossom born beneath no earthly sky.

Companion in her play was Willie Brown.
Beside the boats together on the shore
They chased the seaward wave swift fleeting down
The smooth hard sand; then shrieked and ran before
The wave that, turning, laughed in tones subdued
And stole behind them silently and fleet.
Or clapped its hands, and oft so close pursued
Its fingers touched their bare and flying feet.
They heaped up mimic mounds, outhollowed wells,
Of chosen pebbles little mansions made
For which the busy sea brought shining shells
In blending tints of pink and white arrayed.

A Blossom of the Sea

The schoolhouse with its little busy world
Lay nestling in a closely sheltered nook,
Where elms at noon their shadow flags unfurled
And flung the fluttering folds upon the brook
That, slumbering, seemed in sleepy tones to mock
The stolen whisper soft, and droning din,
And—pattering down some tiny shelf of rock—
The clatter of the buzzing world within.
There side by side the twain together went,
Their trials and their triumphs daily shared;
With earnest brow in thoughtful posture bent
They day by day the little tasks prepared.

When older grown, the hunger of the mind
They fed with few but treasured books, possessed
Among the village homes, and woke refined
And holy thoughts that slumbered in the breast.
A fount of pleasure here they found from which
They daily draughts of rarest rapture drew:
And as they drained each goblet, nectar-rich,
More precious to the lip the fountain grew.

The lithest lad was he on all the coast:
No arm more skilful bending oar to wield,
No bolder heart the little town could boast
To gather harvest from the azure field.
O'er placid forehead locks were idly thrown
Where ebon hand had penciled wavy lines
And glossy curves, as when the billow blown
Through lighted gloom in dusky lustre shines.

And Other Poems

Dark eyes he had, where darting flashes oft
The fiery radiance of his soul revealed;
But oftener still they shone with lustre soft
Of twilight star in vapor half concealed.
Lips thin and firm o'er face of manly mould
An air of dauntless resolution threw;
But yet a something lingered there that told
The loving heart of tender depths and true.

Two meadow rills that wander side by side,
By sun lips kissed, by shadow hands caressed,
Together imperceptibly will glide
And flow united with unruffled breast;
Two twinkling drops on petal of the rose
May lie and sparkle in the morning sun,
But at the breath of lightest breeze that blows
Will touch and kiss and tremble into one.
Thus day by day their lives were seen to glide,
And thus at last together seemed to run;
But they so long had wandered side by side
That neither knew when heart was lost or won.
They never thought their paths could separate,
For all their lives had they together been:
This seemed but as the opening of a gate
That led to wider world and newer scene.

Low circling hills around the village lay.
Where fell the earliest beams of morning sun
A humble home had risen day by day
By thrifty hand from spoil of ocean won.

A Blossom of the Sea

It looked upon the little bay, the bar,
And, far away, upon the tumbling main,
Where she might spy his coming bark afar
On eager wings to enter home again.
There many an idle hour they strayed and planned
A lowly bower or bed of roses bright;
For now approached the day when hand and hand
And heart and heart forever would unite.

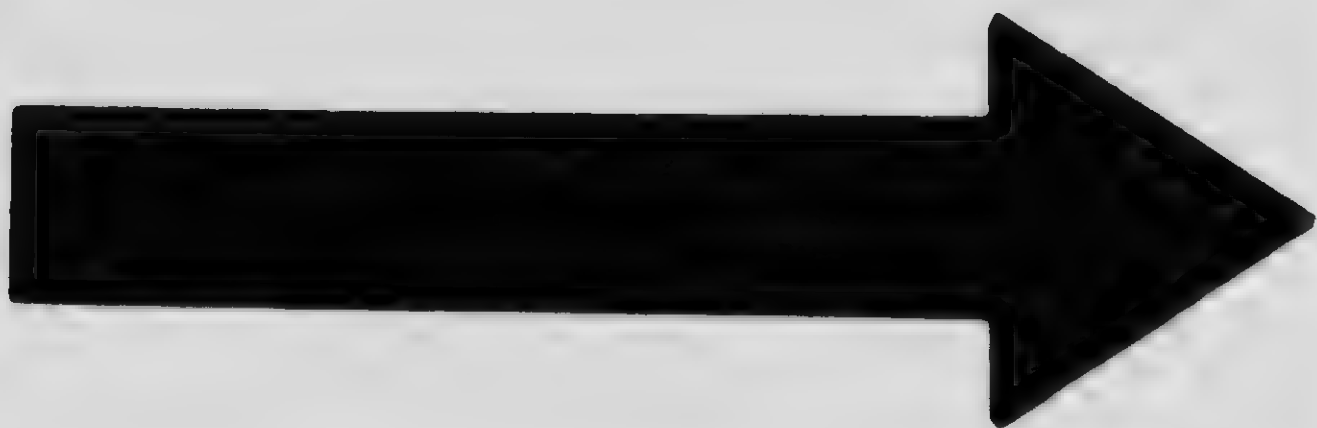
To save the maiden from a needless pain
Her early sorrow all had been concealed;
But now had come the hour when Helen Bain
The story of her early life revealed.
Astounded at the revelation strange,
She all with many an eager question plied.
The current of her life it seemed to change
And cast a pall of darkness on its tide.
She wore an air of thoughtful quietness,
In former hopes of life no pleasure took,
But sought the woodland breeze of soft caress
And whispered song of shadow-checkered brook.
She often wandered on the lonely shore
And pictured all the sadness of the scene;
And oft they found her when the day was o'er
Yet sitting by the nameless mound of green,
Where fancy strove some image in her mind
Of that devoted mother's face to frame
Who died to save her child, yet left behind
Not e'en the cherished memory of her name.

And Other Poems

There many a secret tear in silence fell,
And there was many a wildwood flower strewn;
Nor did she him forget who fought so well
For that dead mother's life and for her own.

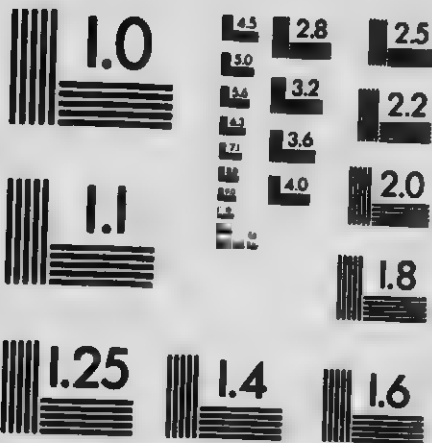
One evening, as she lingered here apart,
A stranger strolling through the village came,
Who, pausing by her with a sudden start,
Her features closely scanning, begged her name.
She told him, and his wonder more increased.
"A Jessie knew I, and so like to thee
At first I deemed thee her,—if not, at least
Her child. But, nay, for this can never be:
The wife I loved, the baby that was mine,
The sea has torn away with cruel hands
And hid them deep in dismal depths of brine,
Or tossed them lifeless on the nameless sands."

He told his tale in broken words and low:
"With Jessie Gray, my newly wedded bride,
I left this land but twenty years ago,
To seek a home beyond the ocean wide.
There Love and Fortune on our dwelling smiled.
Five years had passed when Jessie longed to see
Her native land again. She took her child—
Whose name was Jessie too—a babe of three—
And sailed. No tidings came with passing years.
Save that the ship and all aboard were lost.
Time has not healed the wound nor dried my tears;
But now the ocean I again have crossed.



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A Blossom of the Sea

And where I hear of vessel cast away,
I thither go with half a hope to find
Some faint surviving trace that haply may
Relieve the deathless sorrow of my mind.
A tale of wreck, by roving sailor told,
Has brought me here where kindly seamen lay
The bruised forms the cruel waters hold
And toss in sport, then lifeless fling away."
When Jessie too recounted all, in haste
The lowly home of Helen Bain they sought,
Who told the tale anew, before them placed
The robe with baby Jessie's name enwrought,
The garments, long preserved, that wrapped the child,
And spoke of slender form and forehead fair,
Of clinging arms that clasped in death, and wild,
Disheveled locks of waving golden hair.

He recognized the garments as the same
His Jessie wore,—had seen her hand entwine
Upon the robe of blue her baby's name
In braided letters linked with trailing vine.
He clasped his daughter in a close embrace
That told the longing love of lonesome years,
And gazed upon the dear uplifted face
With eyes that gladness lit through lurking tears.
He stroked her cheek, her silken locks caressed,
The peerless heaven of her eye surveyed,
Her lip and brow with lingering kisses pressed
That all the hunger of his heart betrayed.

And Other Poems

They kissed as those whose lips have never met
And know they nevermore may meet again,
Whose life shall be one ceaseless, long regret,
Whose earthly bliss one moment must contain.

Then in their daily walks about the town
He told her of his home in foreign land,
Where Nature showered her richest treasure down
And Fortune gave her gifts with lavish hand.
"Me also she has favored, and bestowed
Enough thy wildest dream to satisfy.
There shall we go and bring to our abode
Whate'er indulgent father can supply.
Thy hand the dainty trellised vine shall train
Where clustered blooms their garments bright
unroll;
Shall wake with sweep of fingers light the strain
That floats through secret chambers of the soul.
There arbor dim, by murmuring leaves betrayed,
With blossom hands shall lure to cool retreat;
And winding walk embowered in dreamy shade
At twilight hour invite the straying feet.

"One chamber of our home we shall enrich
With ranks of chosen volumes new and old;
And marble forms from many a fluted niche
Their gathered treasure all shall still behold.
There fleeting fancies floating through the brain,
Or ramblings of the soul in realm sublime,
Embalmed in words, their glory will retain,
Surviving all the ruined wrecks of time.

A Blossom of the Sea

There daily shall we meet as friend with friend,
The purest spirits earth has ever known,
And quiet hours in conversation spend,
And lift our minds to level of their own.
We there shall summon back the mighty dead
And hold communion with their souls, and learn
The best and noblest that they thought and said
Ere Death enclosed them in his hollow urn.

"Or, we shall travel far to foreign climes,
To distant shores in fame and story old;
The pillared structures reared in other times
By busy hand of man shall we behold.
There evanescent dreams of beauty lie
Forever by a magic hand enchained,—
The radiant forms, the robes of brilliant dye,
The lights and shadows dim have all remained.
There lustrous eyes from fringed lids let fall
Their melting glances full of loving trust,
And lips with beaming smile the heart enthrall,
Though they that smiled have long been shapeless
dust.

"In deathless marble there have been preserved
Despairing face, distorted in its pain,—
Forms interlocked, to deadly struggle ne'ed,—
The brow of giant frowning in disdain,—
The faultless form, whose lines of beauty sweep
In graceful flowing curves of driven snow,
With arms of naiad mould, and lips that keep
The sweetness yet of centuries ago,

And Other Poems

And e'er shall keep. Howe'er may fleet the years
These forms of beauty ne'er shall know decay,—
No breaking heart, no bitter, blinding tears
Shall furrow trench or sweep one charm away.

"There shall we wander in a land of vines
Where stealthy streams with silent steps descend,
Where noontide sun in softened lustre shines
From skies of blue that seem so low to bend
That heaven's loved ones lean the lily breast
From shining casements of their marble dome,
And, looking down, the pleasant land invest
With radiance of their own supernal home.
At times so low their faces seem to bow
We feel the warmth of loving presence near,
And catch a transient glimpse of glowing brow
And eyes of love that through the ether peer.
And in the hush and silence of the night
We hear their bosoms heaving soft and slow,
Their voices sink to murmured whispers light
In wonder at the charms of all below.
And hands caressing seem to touch us oft
As light as fall of floating apple bloom;
And words are breathed in murmur low and soft
That fill the soul with sense of rare perfume.
The hush of hallowed silence all seems
So full of forms supernal flitting by
The heart, ecstatic in its rapture, deems
That heaven's halls to earth have floated nigh."

A Blossom of the Sea

"And what of Willie Brown?" "Ah, Jessie, fling
All thought of him aside. When thou shalt see
The wider world this newer life shall bring
This fisher lad will little seem to thee.

For both 'tis better far at once to part.

The keenest stroke of sorrow's stinging rod
Is when a wife, refined in mind and heart,
Is linked and fettered to a senseless clod
That finds no beauty in a graceful thought,
For no communion with the great aspires,
Perceives in poet's melting music naught

To soothe the soul or feed its fainting fires;

Whose eyes, forever bent upon the ground,

See not the blooms he crushes 'neath his feet,

Nor glories of the landscape spread around,

Nor dome above with jeweled lights replete;

Whose breast unmoved and passionless remains

When hill and grove with minstrel music ring;

Whose ear is dull to all the magic strains

That lip can blow or finger sweep from string.

The lonely are not they that walk alone,

But who with others must the journey take

And find no heart accordant to their own

Responsive music soul to soul to make.

Thou hast thy gentle mother's gifted mind,

Her slender, graceful form, too frail and slight

For life of toil with one who, roughly kind,

The tender blossoms of thy soul may blight.

Does Winter shelter with his garments cold

The rose when shrinking, trembling in its fear?

And Other Poems

Though clad in armor, does the thistle bold
Protect the tender lily blooming near?
The rose, long cradled in the summer airs,
Will die at touch of Winter's icy breath;
The pointed spears the sturdy thistle bears
The lily's bosom soon will wound to death.

"These people for their kindness merit more
Than hand of even lavish gift repays;
And who for thee a mother's burden bore
Shall nothing lack in her declining days.
Yet here we must no longer now remain,
But go afar in other land to dwell.
A sudden wound produces least of pain;
So bid at once this fisher lad farewell."

The maid had cherished yearnings undefined
For something more than village life had brought;
Her books a love had wakened in her mind
For beauty, music, and the world of thought;
Unchanted anthems haunted long her soul;
Unspoken legends lingered in her ear;
About her fleeting forms of beauty stole,
By eye unseen, to inward vision clear.
Her heart had hungered. Fancy had portrayed
A fairyland its craving to supply:
The father thus could easily persuade,
The daughter's heart unwillingly deny.

She found the lad beside the little cot
Constructed by his hands with rustic skill—
Love-prompted, busy hands that faltered not,
But strove to add some new attraction still.

A Blossom of the Sea

Dim-shadowed dells and glades he wandered through,
And wild-born beings from their dwelling brought,
The sweet-lipped violet in hood of blue,
And ferns in brodered garments, fairy-wrought.
Above the porch he trained the vine she loved,
Whose purple bells, at morning's earliest ray,
Are softly swung by taper fingers gloved
In green, to warn the birds of coming day.

With face averted she her message told,
And talked against the pleadings of her heart.
As Memory swift their happy past unrolled
She felt the pang forevermore to part.
The pink-lipped orchard blooms, in garments white,
Dispense their sweets for evening passer-by,
But Death may come on pinions of the night,
And faded, scentless all may shriveled lie.
To him that rustic home had fairer been
Than lofty hall adorned with sculptured bust;
But now her words had blighted all the scene,
Its rooms were darkened and its flowers dust.
To this he mutely pointed, and amazed
And silent stood; but pallid lips compressed
And eyes to her in speechless sorrow raised,
Betrayed the stifled anguish of his breast.
The maiden's inward feelings were at strife,
Her conscience smote her as she turning said,
"Some other maid will make thee better wife,"
Then faltered out a swift farewell and fled.

And Other Poems

No word his lip could utter to restrain
Her fleeing feet. He knew that sudden night
Had fallen on the morning fields, nor would again
A gleam the darkness of the shadow light.
He left the scene of dreamed-of happiness,
With hurried footsteps to the harbor passed,
Unmoored his shallop—in his deep distress
Unmindful of the threatening rising blast,
Or warnings of the hoary fishermen;
For he would not to other eyes unbare
His bosom, tortured with its anguish, when
He fought the gloomy demons of despair.
The tumbling of the booming, boiling waves
Accorded with the tumult of his soul;
In wildly plunging through their yawning graves
A maddened joy through all his being stole.
And when, with heaving, rocking billows crowned,
Came moving mountain masses gloomed with night,
He rose triumphant o'er their crests, and found
In tossing on their swells a fierce delight.
Contending with the tempest, thus alone
He fought and won his battle with despair;
He steeled his heart, resolved without a moan
The lifelong aching silently to bear.
But ere his breast a haven calm had found,
The dusky hands of night were spreading fast
Their blackest palls of thickest gloom around
His bark, that bowed and bent before the blast.

A Blossom of the Sea

Then through the village soon the rumor ran
That Willie Brown was lost in storm and night.
Then booming bell its far halloo began,
And beacon blazed upon the towered height.
And watchers waited on the wind-swept shore
And peered into the gloom with straining eye,
Or bent attentive where amid the roar
The ear might faintly catch distressful cry.
Though oft deceived by mounting wave whose crest
In beacon-glare had flashed like canvas white,
Or wail of wind like shriek of soul distressed,
The morning dawned without a sail in sight.
Grim Ocean's fit of madness now had passed,
And he with muttered moan and sigh suppressed
In troubled sleep exhausted lay at last,
With fallen flecks of frenzy on his breast.
The watchers one by one had homeward gone;
But on the beach with tresses backward blown,
With tearless eyes and features pale and wan,
And heaving bosom, Jessie stood alone.

As watchman of the coast and sullen guard,
From granite rock had Nature hewn and cleft
A rudely shapen giant, grim and scarred,
And at its base the chiseled fragments left.
Along the rocky shore the sifted sands
The waves had borne and smoothed with constant
tread,
Where idly fallen from their careless hands
Were fluted shell and play-worn pebble spread.

And Other Poems

Here stood she in the morning cold and grey,
While busy, bustling waters, racing fleet,
Ran here and there for treasure-trove, where lay
The fragments fallen at the giant's feet.

"Relentless, all-devouring sea,
O give my loved one back to me.
Endured I not when yet a child,
As victim of thy frenzy wild,
The tempest of thy chilling breath,
The buffets of thy cruel hand,
That laid my mother cold in death,
And cast me lone on rugged strand,
A helpless babe, of all bereft,
To care of pitying stranger left?
Relentless, all-devouring sea,
O give this loved one back to me.

"Yet, oh, this once, thy prey restore,
And I shall chide thee nevermore:
Thy chilliest breath shall breathe of balm,
Thy wildest rage be rippled calm,
The blackest night that glooms thy brow
Shall morning be with gold agleam,
Thy frenzied roar that frights me now
Shall sweetest warbled music seem,
Thy wave of heaven-sweeping crest
Shall sway as soft as mother's breast.
Then, oh, this once, thy prey restore,
And I shall chide thee nevermore.

A Blossom of the Sea

"O give him back that I may tell,
Though seeming false, I loved him well;
Though one brief hour my soul forgot,
These lifelong links are sundered not;
But once, but once my fickle heart
Hath faltered, but it shall no more.
Must here our paths forever part,
And is the happy journey's o'er?
Then I shall walk, my eyelids wet
With dimming tears of vain regret.
O bring him back, that I may tell,
Though seeming false, I loved him well.

"Relentless, all-devouring sea,
O bring my loved one back to me,
That I may feel his warm embrace
And read forgiveness in his face.
If not in life, oh, yet in death,
That I his pallid lips may press
Till mine shall give them living breath
To pardon all my faithlessness,—
Till in his dull, cold ear I tell,
Though seeming false, I loved him well.
Thou cruel, all-devouring sea.
O bring my loved one back to me."

'As thus she spoke, around the headland came
A stalwart form in seaman's habit dressed:
A pause, a startled cry, a whispered name,—
The maiden sank unconscious on his breast.

And Other Poems

By baffling blasts, on bounding billows borne,
The lad at last to nearest port was blown,
And folding there the shallop's pinions, torn,
Had homeward trod the trampled beach alone.
With steel-nerved breast and dauntless bearing proud,
He strode beside the overpeering rocks,
Resolved to meet, as they, with head unbowed
The wildest tempest and the fiercest shocks.
A glimpse of lissome form and streaming hair;
Then, pausing by the giant's feet, he heard
The tearless maiden's self-accusing prayer,
And hope revived his deepest being stirred.
A sudden light had broken through the cloud
That seemed to blacken all his way with night;
The morning meadows broke in singing loud
That put the sombre silences to flight.

No needless words were said. In close embrace
The raptured lovers stood upon the shore.
The glow of morning lit each gladdened face,
And fears of final parting were no more.

Her father, learning of her absence, fled
With hasty footsteps here and saw the twain,
And in her face the open secret read:
The lately found to him was lost again.
"From Willie, father, I can never part:
We two have been together all our lives.
Such tendrils Time has thrown about my heart,
To break their clasp my bosom vainly strives.

A Blossom of the Sea

The terrors of the night have taught me this:
My fairy dream of happiness is done;
For let the future bring me bane or bliss,
Where'er the path may lead, our ways are one.

The bird that all its little life hath spent
'Mid simple blooms and swinging leafy sprays
Would pine if in a palace garden pent
Where gaudy plant a richer robe displays.
Go, leave me in this lowly humble scene;
For daily life has in this soul of mine
So linked and woven this that I had been
Unhappy in that grander home of thine.
Remote from bustling strife and pompous pride
We two shall walk our little way alone,
Shall live and love, then, lying side by side,
Sleep our long sleep untroubled and unknown.
Forget these hours, and let me be again
A lingering shadow left from other years;
But thou to me forever wilt remain
A blissful memory dashed with dimming tears."

By clambering vines now thickly overgrown
The cottage nestles on the circling hill;
Beside the bower the rose has yearly blown,
And fern and violet find a shelter still.
For Jessie still the purple bells of dawn
Are at the porch by Willie's hand arrayed,
And now their children play upon the lawn
And drink the fragrance of the cooling shade.

And Other Poems

But near, where oaks unfurl their banners old,
And dying Day, from trembling, glowing hands,
At last flings down his miser hoards of gold,
A grander, not a dearer, mansion stands.
'Tis there that Jessie and her Willie dwell:
But winding hedge and beaten footpath show
They oft frequent the little cot and tell
Of scenes and loves of years of long ago.

One dwells with them who wears a kindly face,
Whose ample locks are richly touched with white;
But where the days of sadness left their trace
Have years of gladness cast a wondrous light.
Though blackest storms career across the sky
And all the cheerful beams of heaven hide,
Yet oft the cloudy steeds of darkness fly,
And bright is all the West at eventide.

Her father had consented to remain—
By Willie's earnest, manly bearing moved,
But more by Jessie's words. Three years the twain
To college halls he sent and further proved.
Then fitting out a vessel for the land
Beyond the main, he put the lad aboard.
Sea-nurtured from his youth, to high command
He rose. And now his vessels richly stored
With foreign goods return. The fishing port
Has widened to a town, whose hardy sons
Upon his decks the ocean breezes court,
And homeward bring for wife and little ones.

A Blossom of the Sea

Across the rocking billows of the deep,
Their gathered spoils. Now larger homes appear,
Where often Beauty and Refinement keep
An even pace with Plenty all the year.
Than Helen Bain's no fairer home is there.
Her lightest needs are lavishly supplied,
Though snows have fallen on the wavy hair,
The looks of kindly goodness yet abide
Enwritten on her face, with something too
Like growing rays of Heaven's dawn, that stream
Already o'er the hills of Death, and through
The mists of earth upon her forehead beam.

By all are Jessie and her Willie known:
For light and beauty have they spread around,
Encouraged, lifted, helping arms have thrown
About the erring weak, till all have found
The ways of Knowledge lead to higher heights
Of happiness, that broaden to the view,
And onward lead to more supreme delights
Than ever soul of groveling mortal knew.
For onward, upward points the hand of Fate,
And onward, upward moves the human race;
Though toilful be the path and slow the rate,
The host advances to a higher place.
Though many stragglers loiter in the rear,
And blindly flounder in the deep morass,
And few be they who yet the summit near,
Yet onward, upward moves the struggling mass.
The blood of all the centuries and the tears
That stain the pathway have not been in vain;
Trace all its windings through the weary years,
And mighty strides of progress then are plain.

And Other Poems

As Knowledge slow unfolds the growing mind
The soul awakes and breaks in gladder song;
And eyes are lifted to the light, inclined
To circle blindly round the feet so long.
And beckoned on by Jessie's guiding hand,
These villagers have lifted too their eyes
And, seeing lights on higher slopes of land,
Forsaken lower moors and murky skies;
And rising from the misty fog and gloom
That clouded and obscured the vision there,
They walk serener plains of wider room,
And drink the rapture of a purer air.
The world is brighter than they ever dreamed.
Although in toil the fleeting days are spent,
Each golden hour by useful task redeemed,
The soul is not as in a prison pent;
For on the scene will often Music steal
And flood the air with melting strain divine,
And Art the charm of blending tints reveal
When framed in curves of beauty's flowing line,
And Thought, with subtle treasures of the mind
Upon undying pages old impressed
In glowing words, a quiet hour will find
To wake the slumbering genius of the breast.

Remembering all the darkness of the past,
The light and gladness of the world to be,
They still believe some angel hand has cast
Upon their shore this Blossom of the Sea.
August, 1897.

A Blossom of the Sea

A PIONEER FARMER

WHERE clothed in verdure yonder fields are seen
In swelling curves of hill and hollow rolled
The squadroned maples stood in tunics green
And baldrics bright with gleams of autumn gold.
There, stationed 'mid the host, the stalwart pine
Above their purple plumes aloft had flung
His banner broad, whose folds in graceful line
Low drooping swayed or slow unfurling swung.

In autumn dim, alone and undismayed,
A gallant youth that bannered army neared;
He smote their proudest low with flashing blade
And fortress rude among the fallen reared.
And here he brought his bride of tender years,
Sweet-lipped and slender as a bending bloom,
Whose eyes, emerged from some dim sea of tears,
Would still in star-like flashes light and loom.
Her brow . . . me angel hand had smoothed and pressed
Till more than earthly calmness there reposed,
Her misty cloud of tresses had caressed
Till tints of glory every wave disclosed.

The walls were built of rugged beams and round,
Rough-notched at end and interspaced with clay.
High-gabled roof the humble structure crowned,
Through which a chimney struggling made its way.

And Other Poems

An ample hearth within where high were heaped
The oaken logs on frosty winter night,
And flames triumphant loud in laughter leaped
And clapped their ruddy hands in sheer delight.
The shadows, beckoned from their dim abode,
Along the wall a merry measure paced;
While shining pinions 'mid the rafters glowed,
And giant glooms their flitting flashes chased.

A sudden flare lit all the simple room:
The floor of riven pine; the mantel-shelf
Agleam with shining ware; the clacking loom
That claimed an ample corner for itself;
The chimney seat, a couch for stranger guest;
The easy chair with woven splint inwrought;
The table, whiter than if linen-drest,
Where merry cups each glint and twinkle caught;
The curtained bed of down, heaped mountain-high
And crowned with fluffy pillows light as air,
Where smooth-laid counterpane allured the eye
With many a gay, grotesquely patterned square.

Their home was small, the forest dim and lone;
About their hearth yet children playing came
And crooned their little songs in cheery tone,
And flung a light from flashing locks of flame.
All day she nimbly sped the moaning wheel
That sighed and wailed its plaintive, weird refrain,
Or filled the pauses with the clicking reel
That from the spindle whirled the growing skein.

A Blossom of the Sea

While flared on evening hearth the flaming wood,
The needles twinkled in her fingers fleet
That wove for rounded cheek the cosy hood
Or shaped the stocking for the dimpled feet.

There too for him life ran its busy round:
At glow of morn his ringing axe awoke
The silent shades and dusky depths profound
Of sombre-mantled pine and burly oak.
While hostile tempest loud the trumpet blew
They stood undaunted at the charger's blast,
On high their arms in wild defiance threw
And dealt their blows in fury as he passed.
But now, their tresses trembling at each blow,
By comrades' clinging hands in vain delayed,
With sigh of last farewell and groaning throe
Of dying agony before his glancing blade
They reel, the lofty head is lowly bowed
With all its tossing plumes, the arms outthrust
Crash prone to earth, and all the tresses proud
Are torn and rent and darkened in the dust.
His hands had thus by never-flagging zeal
The sunny fields from forest dense and tall
Out-hollowed with consuming flame and steel;
The fallen trunks had shaped for sheltering wall
To shield his harvest from the winter gale,
Or yonder fence that mossy vesture wears,
That tacks and veers like wind-confronted sail,
And all the farm divides in verdant squares.

And Other Poems

By years of toil incessant from his land
Obstructing rock and root were slowly cleared.
As fortune blessed the labor of his hand
Increasing signs of comfort there appeared:
Yon roomy mansion where the morning still
With golden finger gilds the eastern pane;
Capacious barns where vying autumns fill
And heap the garner high with shining grain.
The orchard trees on yonder southern slope
Erect in neatly ordered rows he placed,
And pruned and shaped their spreading boughs, in hope
Their fruitage in the after-years to taste.
There Spring unfolds the bridal robes of Dawn,
Of vial odors brings her treasured stores,
And o'er the cloud of blushful tinted lawn
The fragrant balm with hand unsparing pours.
There Autumn hangs his rounded cups of gold
That such abundant nectar draughts contain,
The brimming cup, unable all to hold,
Is often dyed and streaked with ruddy stain.

He rose betimes with cheery heart and brave
To cleave the furrows of his fruitful land;
He sowed, and what the God of harvest gave
He gathered to his barns with thankful hand.
When sultry sun or chill untimely frost
Would on his fields their blighting finger lay,
He ploughed again in hope, nor courage lost,
For richly would the coming year repay.
Who life preserves within the tiny germ
Enfolded closely in the wheaten breast,

A Blossom of the Sea

Who feeds with fallen leaf the hidden worm,
Who builds for timid bird the sheltered nest,
Who for the kine a winter garment weaves,
Nor crimson vest the robin does deny,
With careful eye the sparrow's fall perceives,
Would give to trusting man a sure supply.

To him in vain the helpless never went
Nor poured their troubles into deafened ear.
The stricken home he meet assistance lent
And gave to passing stranger of his cheer.
The man of God, who threading forest gloom
On jaded steed too seldom thither fared,
Found, like the prophet old, his little room
And restful couch by loving hand prepared.
By winding ways the neighbors thither went
Through leafy dusks by starry twilight led,
And lifted heart in song, or reverent bent
As earnest lips the Master's message read.

He dwelt among his dusky herds of kine
And snowy flocks like ancient patriarch;
He called them all by name, and warm would shine
Responsive, dreamy eyes of lustre dark.
Their master was he, kind and provident:
For winter needs he hoarded ample store;
With tender bosom o'e the suffering bent
And in his arms their feeble kindred bore.
His form while yet afar the horses knew,
And neighing o'er the meadow trooping came,

And Other Poems

With fondling touch around him pleading drew
The dainty morsel from his hand to claim.

Reflecting, toiling daily in his field,
He learned the open book of life to read:
What at the harvest hour the heart shall yield
We each determine as we sow the seed;
Who cleaves the turf with steady hand and strong,
Uproots the weed and plants the chosen grain,
Although the days of watchful toil be long
At last his meed of ripened ears shall gain;
Who merely leaves the garden of the mind
An idle field unfurrowed and unsown,
Awaiting more auspicious hour, shall find
The vacant soil with tangle overgrown;
Who all the year has planted weeds and tares
May not with right complain or justly blame
If, when his sheaf he to the garner bears,
The Lord of Harvest cast it to the flame:
For who would store among the precious grain
That he had stooped to gather from the dust,
Had sifted, fanned, and winnowed pure again,
The weed, the bur, the mildewed ear and rust?

To him all Nature lessons could unfold:
The fairy plant upspringing from the sod
Has root to cling and grapple to the mould,
Has bloom to rise and lift its face to God;
The meanest life that grovels on the ground
Is ever blindly striving for the light;

A Blossom of the Sea

The vine that hath its lattice limit found
An arm will lift to reach a newer height;
The pine that deepest in the earth descends
And, ever busy, gathers far and nigh,
This gathered earthly treasure all expends
In climbing upward nearer to the sky;
The lower must subserve the higher end;
The purer beams are ever on the height,
For growth and bloom all upward strain and bend,
And souls can blossom only in the light;
For light alone the waxen cup can mould,
Can trace the netted vein or flowing line,
Can flame in scarlet, gild with burnished gold,
Can faintly tinge or steep the lips in wine.

And life is not for endless toil alone,
To wrap the body warmly and to feed;
The heart has also yearnings of its own,
Its craving hunger and its crying need.
The hand that spread the banner of the sky
And decked with golden stars its tender blue,
That touched the petal's lips with ruby dye,
Hath given man a love of beauty too.
Who shaped the slender streamer of the sedge,
Who wrapped the apple in its ruddy rind,
Who veined the leaf and wove its brodered edge,
Hath use and beauty ever close combined.

Thorn, fibre, leaf, and clinging spiral scroll
Have each a purpose in the Maker's plan,
And every passion of the human soul
Contributes to development of man.

And Other Poems

Our loves, our hates, our angers, and our fears,
Our hopes, despairs, unquenchable desires,—
All these, transmuted by the moulding years,
For perfect growth the soul of man requires.

The springing shoot, the bud, the fluttering spray,
The faded stem, the withered leaf and dry,
Show life a steady progress to decay,
And all of earth or soon or late must die.
When death stole nigh his bride of memory sweet
And touched her tender eyes to endless sleep,
He murmured low in resignation meet,
"We sow in tears, we soon in joy shall reap;
For He that stoops to lift the slender blade
To light and air through clods of darksome earth
Can cleave the sod where man is lowly laid
And give in nightless world a second birth."

His hands are still, his given task is done;
That he might rise no one has fallen low;
His gain is not from store of others won;
His triumph plunged no other heart in woe;
For him no field is red with human gore,
No smothered wretches clog the darksome mine,
Nor faint by furnace gorged with molten ore,
Nor stifled sink in gulfs of roaring brine.
By blood and tears his wealth is undefiled;
For what he gained he gained by honest toil.
The lands he won he won from Nature's wild,
And fair and fruitful made the barren soil.

A Blossom of the Sea

He spent his golden moments not in vain;
He joyed, he sorrowed as we mortals must;
He ran, he stumbled, rose and ran again,
But never lay and groveled in the dust.
On yonder slope that overlooks the scene
Of all his toil he takes his lasting sleep.
In vain shall Morning toil his couch of green
To call him as of yore from slumber deep.

God's first behest, to till and dress the land,
He has obeyed. His works with us remain.
Though lifeless on the bosom lies the hand,
It has increased the sum of human gain.
He found a forest tangled lone and dim,
Of savage brute the home since Time began;
He left these sunny meadows neat and trim,
Prepared and ready for the home of man:
The earth more like a Garden of the Skies,
More fitting for the growth of mind and soul,
A higher plane whence man may higher rise,
With nearer steps approach the final goal,—
That goal to which we slowly tend, the dream
Of heathen bard and sacred prophet old,—
When earth again a paradise may seem
And man his God may unabashed behold.
For all that, mounting, smooth the steeps of Time
Are hewing pathways for the host unborn
That, coming after, to the height shall climb
And walk serene the Tablelands of Morn.

And Other Poems

HOW LONG?

HOW long, all-seeing Lord, how long
Ere yet thy reign of peace shall come,
When man shall strive no more with Wrong,
And frenzied lips of War be dumb?

Though reeking blood and orphan tears
Have ever yet been Freedom's price,
In all the onward march of years
Must these be still the sacrifice?

Must each serener height be gained
By flashing sword and flaming gun?
By bosom-thrust and garment stained
Must every forward step be won?

Shall evil men our way oppose
Till silenced in the grasp of Death?
Will naught avail but trenchant blows
And blighting blast of cannon's breath?

Or, may it be th; will divine
To leave unchecked this crimson flood?
Must Freedom's sacrifice, as thine,
Be made in vesture dipped in blood?

A Blossom of the Sea

Wherein we err for lack of light,
O plainer make thy hidden ways;
If wrongly we contend for Right,
Forgive, and make our wrath thy praise.

And Other Poems

ONWARD.

FAR-SEEING Fate, controlling all,
Uplifts the race by slow degrees,
And men and nations rise and fall
Obedient to her dark decrees.

Her hand unseen directs our ways
And guides through evil into good;
The turbaned Moslem kneels and prays
Where shrieking fanes of Moloch stood.

A tyrant hand may redden France
And topple monarchs from the throne,
But Europe's cringing hosts advance
And claim their harvests as their own.

Whoe'er by Clive or Hastings bled,
They wrought with Progress and with Fate,
For India lifts her languid head
And slowly strides to Freedom's gate.

Awhile the gloom of battle-smoke,
Then flame and roar of cannon cease,
The chains of slavery are broke
And Egypt wears the smile of peace.

A Blossom of the Sea

Did Rhodes but dream an idle dream,
Or was his vision that of Clive?
The hour had struck for veldt and stream
To break the shackle and the gyve.

The Cross that lights the Southern skies
Should look on triple Cross below,
For where the flag of Britain flies
Unfettered Faith and Freedom grow.

Nor may the tumult all be vain,
Nor every blood-besprinkled field,
For flaming roar and drenching rain
Foretell the peaceful autumn yield.

Another land has Britain freed
From slavish wrong and settled night;
Another host must Britain lead
To far-off leveled plains of light.

In Greece our Art and Learning grew,
From her Castalian fount we draw;
Where Rome's imperial eagles flew
She left her Government and Law;

But Britain's meed of fame shall be,
Though all her fanes to dust be hurled,
She nurtured Freedom by the sea
And gave it to the waiting world.

And Other Poems

MAJUBA HILL

*. . . the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall.—Byron.*

COMRADES that have long been sleeping
On Majuba's rugged hill,
Hark, I hear a murmur sweeping
Through the moonlit silence chill.

Daisied down and heathered highland ,
Harvest plain and mapled height,
Flock-frequented southern island
Rise before my visioned sight.

Gay with flags and lances gleaming,
Tramping to the beat of drum,
Forth from cot and palace teeming,
Shoreward marching, thousands come.

Now their coursers tread the billows
Foaming white beneath their feet——
Comrades, turn upon your pillows!
Hear the iron pulses beat!

See, they stand with armor glancing
Marshaled at the bugle call;
Now they sternly come, advancing
Over trench and mountain wall.

A Blossom of the Sec

Onward, flaming death defying,
Battling with a hidden foe,
Baffled, bleeding, falling, dying,
Move the legions, thinning slow.

Yonder on the crest appearing,
Up they burst 'mid crash of gun!
Hark, the mighty roar of cheering—
Foemen fled and victory won!

Stamp this deep on deathless pages:
"Justice often tarries long,
But, though slumbering for ages,
Ever rights a human wrong."

Once again on Freedom's altar
Lie our best and dearest slain;
But can sons of Britain falter,
Though another's be the gain?

Long your name shall live in story,
Ye that nobly fought and well;
Welcome to our bed of glory,
Ye that as avengers fell.

Ours to fail in the endeavor;
Yours to win the bloody field,
Yours to live in fame forever;
Ours to die—but not to yield.

And Other Poems

Barren, bleak and lonely mountain,
Now departed is thy shame;
Cleansed by victor's crimson fountain,
Thine is now an honored name.

In the silence deep and solemn
We shall slumber now content;
Rear for us no storied column,
This our noblest monument!

A Blossom of the Sea

CANADA TO COLUMBIA.

O ELDER sister, though thou didst of yore
Forsake thy mother's ancient hall and flee
To be the chosen bride of Liberty,
She cherishes her grief and wrath no more,
Nor seeks the broken circle to restore,
Yet fain would clasp thee to her breast again,
But thou aloof uncertain dost remain.

O canst thou not the one mistake forget
Of her that bore thee, taught thy lips to frame
Thy early words, thy God in prayer to name;
That in the paths of right and justice set
Thy feet, where not infrequent walk they yet;
That stood devoted at thy youthful side,
Nor e'en her blood in thy defence denied?

But if thy younger sister yet abide
Content and happy in her mother's hall,
Nor feel the bond of blood a menial thrall,
But, leaning heart to heart, of choice confide
In mother yet as dearest guard and guide,—
If thou wilt not thy mother's love regain,
Why must thy cradle sister plead in vain?

And Other Poems

Yet all the best that bubbles in our veins
We sisters drew from that one Saxon breast.
Where oftentimes thy maiden cheek has pressed,
Mine resting still in loving trust remains.
Our bonds of blood should be enduring chains.
Obey thy heart and grasp the proffered hand,
Then all the world our wills may not withstand.
1898.

A Blossom of the Sea

COLUMBIA TO CANADA.

LONG have I proudly held aloof, nor designed
To tread the chambers of that mother's hall
Who, when I heard the bridegroom's earnest call,
With needless force my hasting feet detained
Till deep our garments were in crimson stained,
Till by her altar, cleft and overturned,
Among the ashes cold, lay Love inurned.

I fled, and far away in western wild,
Where Heaven keeps from dusk to dawn unfurled
My banner broad and blue and star-emppearled,
Have I a home on ampler basis piled,
And busy wrought, alone, unreconciled.
Thee, by thy mother bidding, loved I not,
And even smote when yet my wrath was hot.

But when, indignant at a neighbor's woe,
Who, crouching 'neath the trampling heel, awoke
At last to strike the swift avenging stroke,
But, fainting, sank beneath redoubled blow,
I dared to smite the swarthy alien foe,
And all with threatening aspect stood around,
In her a friend, in her alone, I found.

Ana Other Poems

And then the dormant memories of the years
When happy in her constant love I dwelt
Came flooding back again, until I felt
The lengthened absence only more endears
That mother whom my inner soul reveres.
Together be our banners broad unfurled—
The Cross, the Stars, the beacons of the world!
1898.

A Blossom of the Sea

BUILDERS OF THE BROAD DOMINION.

BUILDERS of the broad Dominion,
Delve foundations deep and wide,
Strong to bear a noble structure
That, resisting rage of tempest,
Through the ages shall abide.
Build enduring walls of beauty,
Crown the shining crest with turrets,
Seat it high upon the summit,
Where its light shall serve the nations
As a beacon and a guide.

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Build as if in Heaven's sight;
Bending with becoming reverence,
Mould your laws in truth and justice,—
God is yet a God of Right.
Masses make a rabble merely,
Only men of thought a nation;
Fling abroad the flag of Knowledge,
Gather 'neath it all the people:
God is too a God of Light.

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Union only can succeed:
Stay the petty strife of party,

And Other Poems

Stop the hungry hunt for office.
Hush the crafty cry of creed.
Labor for your land's advancement
As a banded league of brothers;
Climb, but lift your comrades with you;
Set your heart on something higher
Than the lust of selfish greed.

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Love the honor of your land:
Meet your neighbor as an equal,
Crouch nor cringe for crumbs of favor,
Give and take a brother's hand.
British blood is bounding in you,
British hearts within you beating.—
Never basely kneels the Briton.
Bow to none in meek submission;
Proudly face the world and stand.

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Dowered rich are your domains:
Land of lake and rushing river,
Land of fragrant slopes of forest,
Land of level pathless plains;
Land where summer sunlight lingers
Painting peach and flushing apple;
Land of bright and bracing winters
Sending vital force and vigor
Flashing, thrilling through the veins.

A Blossom of the Sea

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Waiting long your wealth has lain:
Mountain breasts, to fulness bursting,
Laced with shining veins of metal,
Wait for you to stoop and drain;
Prairies, that a thousand ages
Have been storing deep with richness,
As a food for future millions,
Wait to fill your cloven furrows
With the wealth of waving grain.

Builders of the broad Dominion,
Mount your iron steed and roam,
Set his name of silver streaming,
Heat his blood to seething hisses,
Bring your boundless treasure home.
Trail the timbers from the forest,
Whirl your wheels with tossing torrents,
Delve a deeper path to ocean,
Lade your vessels to the bulwarks,
Plough the plunging deeps to foam.

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Sonnets

And Other Poems

ENGLAND.

○ MOTHER, pilot in remoter sea,
Redeemer of the wild and barren land,
That all may under Freedom's banner stand
And hear thy world-wide mandate to be free,
Thy ancient foes in envy picture thee
A greedy tyrant wielding flaming brand,
And ruthless crushing with a bloody hand
The brave that will not tamely bow the knee.

Yet thou hast pardoned traitors from thy hearth,
And stealthy foes that, masked in thine array,
When winning, strip the maimed and even slay;
And thou alone on all the reddened earth
Hast paused to shield amid the frenzied strife
A fighting foe's forsaken child and wife.

THE BAY OF QUINTE.

○ BAY of beauty, hollowed by the hands
That in the heavens rolled the orbs of flame;
○ flashing mirror set in emerald frame
Where Morn, awaking, mute in rapture stands,
And E're, disrobing, lays her jeweled bands;
Where placid wave and lulling airs proclaim

A Blossom of the Sea

For silken sail a haven safe, the same
As for the panting barge from other lands.

Fair image of our God's wide-open palm,
That proffers beauties from the morning sweet
Till dusky fingers Twilight's lattice close,
And when at last we turn to seek repose,—
If Life have been with toil or play replete,—
Provides for each a haven safe and calm.

A LEADER.

WE SAW the sun with glorious rising beams
Dispersing shadows of our western sky,
With light increasing ever soaring high
And warming all our waiting hills and streams.
He touched the peaks where southern eagle screams
Till kindly wonder kindled in her eye;
He eastward let his shining arrows fly
Till ancient kingdoms wakened from their dreams.

But now behold, alas, some fateful hand
A veil of cloud o'er all his glory throws
And casts a blight of darkness o'er the land
On which the brightness of his dawning rose.
Shall such a sun in noontide splendor stand,
Yet sink in night and darkness at its close?

And Other Poems

THE MARSH IN WINTER.

THE marsh now lies in desolation drear,
And igloos fur-clad Eskimos have built
Amid the tangled flags that, pale and sere
(Broken Excaliburs bereft of jeweled hilt),
Are isled among the icy seas and shoals:
A chill domain of death,—a desert lone
Where Life is not; but lost and wandering souls
Sweep by on midnight wings with shriek and moan.

Yet here a voice shall bid the dead arise,
An arm relift the blade above the mere,
And, beckoned from remoter southern skies,
Shall wingèd wanderers nest and babble here,
Whenever Spring, God's resurrecting breath,
Shall breathe upon this frozen realm of death.

DEFORMITIES.

WHENE'ER we meet a fellow-mortal born
With shapeliness of figure unendowed,—
A feature drawn awry, a shoulder bowed,
A curved or shrunken limb of vigor shorn,—
How prone to lift derisive lip in scorn,
And, careless of the sting, to cry aloud
The mocking name that flings a sadder cloud
Upon a brow sufficiently forlorn!

A Blossom of the Sea

And yet the man we seldom so despise,
That hath his inward self distorted made,
That fouls his lip with curse and reeking jest,
That hides a sink of baseness in his breast,
And boasts of trustful confidence betrayed,
By sleek hypocrisy and fawning lies.

THE DEATH AND MEMORY OF THE JUST.

WHEN silent hushes come, and dying Day
His hand extends agleam with heaven's gold,
To bless his waiting children of the wold,
He leaves a radiance where his fingers lay;
When Autumn, too, arising, soars away
With fiery steeds and chariot flame-enrolled,
He downward flings his mantle's gleaming fold
And wraps the watching woods in bright array.

So, on the features of departing saint
A softened gleam of glory often grows
That seems a radiance streaming far and faint
From Heaven's gate beginning to uncloze.
In death, the glory hushes all complaint,
And radiant are the golden afterglows.

WHAT hand has ever stayed the coming tide?
It sweeps at last the stoutest soul away.
Why dream we not and rest our little day?
Death takes the sweet-lipped maiden at our side,

And Other Poems

The friend of constant heart and judgment tried,
And stands with finger ready raised, that may
Upon our busy hands a silence lay
Ere aught be done that seeming may abide.

True heart, forbear to falter at thy task,
Nor pause and tremble at the yawning sod:
Thy comrades of the morning thou shalt meet.
Fill life with deeds: not thine it is to ask
If thou or other shall the work complete:
Perform thy part and leave the rest to God.

THE father sends his children to the field
And bids them labor till the call to rest,
Cleaving the glebe, removing from its breast
Encumb'ring stone and wealth-absorbing weed,
Dispensing carefully the chosen seed,
That here they in the harvest hour may gain
Reward of ripened sheaves and garnered grain,
When autumn shall her due abundance yield.

The Master sends us to the fields of Life
Our given task with patience to fulfil,
Not ceasing till the summons to depart,
Contending for the right, and waging strife
With every form of soul-retarding ill:
We reap the harvest daily in the heart.

A Blossom of the Sea

“QUIT work and live: we'll be a long time dead.”
Nay, rather work that we may never die.
“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread”—

These Scripture words do seemingly imply
A curse, but are a blessing in disguise.

The truest pleasure man can ever find
Is when in honest work he busy plies
All energies of hand and heart and mind.

There is a longing in each human breast
Not even in the dust to lie forgot:
Only the one that bravely does his best,—
How long may be the task it matters not,—
Fulfilling all commands his God may give,
Hereafter, nay, e'en *here*, does *truly* live.

ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN.

Obiit February, 1899

A SOUL like that of Keats, with Beauty thrilled,
Hath also ere its noontide perished long;
The seraph lips amid their gladdest song
Some hand of silent touch hath ever stilled.
The harp lies broken; and the finger, skilled
To waken numbers cheery, sweet, and strong,
No more the gladsome cadence shall prolong
Till every listening heart with hope be filled.

And Other Poems

Though dear the loss of that unfinished strain,
Though skilful hand and tuneful lip be gone,
He hath not swept the string nor sung in vain:
The song that swelled with hope and loving trust
Shall e'er in cheerful notes go ringing on,
Nor die and be enshrouded with his dust.

THEODORE H. RAND.

WHERE sleepless Minas in a weird unrest
Blew loud his trump or moaned his dirge of
pain,

He caught the roll and cadence of a strain
That human lip had never yet expressed.
'Mid academic temples of the West
The sounds of home rang o'er and o'er again,
Till swelling came, attuned to that refrain,
The thrilling song that haunted long his breast.

But, by the sea, his lonely mother yearned
With Honor's wreath her absent son to grace.
In jealous joy to see him home returned
She wrapt him close in overfond embrace.
Now, still and songless, on her breast he sleeps,
And sorrowed Minas ever moans and weeps.

A Blossom of the Sea

ALEXANDRA

A VIKING'S daughter, love-allured, she came
O'er northern deeps to share a sea-king's
throne;

No heartier welcome has a princess known,
No fairer bride could prouder monarch claim;
Years have not dimmed her welcome nor her fame;
And now, while bowing myriads bemoan
Her Edward's loss, for her, bereft and lone,
Our trembling lips the tenderest blessings frame.

Faint not, dear heart, beneath thy weight of woe;
Fairest of queens, our Britain ill can spare
The gentle hand that knows the art that brings
Distress relief, like magic touch of kings.

Late may thy feet to tread his way prepare,
Long may the world thy angel presence know.

ON VIEWING KING EDWARD'S PICTURE

METHINKS I see in that majestic face
The cheeriness that speaks the hearty friend,
The purpose firm, undaunted to the end;
The wisdom that a kingly brow should grace;
And something, too, divinely sad—the trace
Of cares and sore perplexities that rend
The earnest heart when those beloved contend,
Forgetful how they ruin or debase.

And Other Poems

Model of monarchs, king in mind and heart,
Too diligent he has the people served,
Nor paused till death his busy hand unnerved.
On him, the lord of kingdoms far apart,
As now he lays his earthly sceptre down,
In love the world bestows her richest crown.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

Obiit June 7th, 1910.

TEACHER and Sage who wrote with magic pen
Dipped in Castalian fount, who standing by
Surveyed with clear and unimpassioned eye
The deeds of nations and the thoughts of men;
Keen to discern a human wrong, and then
Bold to o'erthrow the Dagon and defy
With dignity the clam'rous hosts that try
Their fallen idol to erect again.

O Soul clear-visioned, hast thou fathomed now
The Riddle of Existence that perplexed
Thy honest heart and clouded oft thy brow?
Full needlessly has this thy bosom vexed—
Ready thy heart and ready was thy pen
For aught that cheered or blessed thy fellowmen.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

Obiit August 13th, 1910

NATIONS HAD stormed their heated wrath away,
And, torn by shell and trenched by eager steel
And trampled by the frenzied charger's heel,
Thousands of Britain's best and bravest lay

A Blossom of the Sea

Sore racked with pangs; and Pestilence held sway
In barren sheds, and set a scarlet seal
On lip and brow, that might to Death reveal,
Than in the battling ranks a surer prey.

Angel of Hope and Healing, dying men
Paused on the verge to answer her recall
And felt the thrill of life reviving when
She laid her hand upon each beating brow.
They rose to bless her as she passed, as all
Arise and bless her as she passes now.

MARK TWAIN.

Obit April 21, 1910.

STRUGGLING to reach some far dim-lying coast,
O'er sands that burn, in vales remote from day,
On rocky summits bleak, in dense array,
Or scattered ranks, we strove, a fainting host:
Maker of Mirth, when thou wert given the post
Of guide to lead by more delightful way,
Ever thou didst a cheery front display
E'en when thy heart was crushed and bleeding most.

Nor less a guide, nor least in merit thou,
Though thy commands were given with a smile;
Thou hast inspired as leader of the van
Because we knew thou wert in heart a man,
Honest in thought and deed, contemning guile,
Worthy this wreath we lay upon thy brow.

And Other Poems

FRAGMENTS.

By outward dress the heart we measure oft :
The thistle hath a thorny coat, but yet
The bee can find a bosom silken-soft
And ruby lips with dewy sweetness wet.

The many tasks I leave undone
Demand an age of years ;
Too soon the slender thread is spun,
Too swift the fatal shears.

A Blossom of the Sea

LES BELLES CANADIENNES.

TO LOUISE.

O GLOSSY locks that Night with dusky hand
Hath swept in waves and lit with lurking light,
Profusely clustered round a forehead bright
With beams of beauty brought from Morning Land!
O lips that breathe of scented blossoms fanned
By low-voiced breezes loitering in their flight!
O eyes of darksome depths of lustrous Night
That dream of waves that lap Italian strand!

The softened glow that slumbers in thine eyes,
The veil of light about thy forehead thrown,
A sunny climate only can impart:
This clime of warm and unbecclouded skies,
Where all thy charms have to perfection grown,
Is but the sunshine of thy loving heart.

TO MARIE.

WHEN lonely wanderer on the starless deep,
By shrouding glooms and baffling blasts dismayed,
Discerns an isle of ever-during shade,

And Other Poems

Of level greens and fairy-haunted steep,
Where bubbling murmurs o'er the senses creep,
And snowy lips to fragrant rest persuade,
He longs to furl his canvas torn and frayed,
To wake forever or untroubled sleep.

So I, though baffled oft and wandering lone,
Have found in thee the friend I long have sought,
With heart and mind responsive to my own;
And may I in thy presence but abide,
Enraptured with the music of thy thought,
No more I seek nor ask a heaven beside.

TO NELLIE.

ONLY one shrine I kneel to day by day,
Only one flower to me can fragrant seem,
Only one bird can thrill me with its lay,
Only one star can send a cheering beam:
If then that shrine be closed, I cannot pray;
That star obscured, all heaven is blank and void;
That flower dead, all sweetness fled away;
That bird-voice stilled, all melody destroyed.

And yet I did not deem one absent face,
One voice unheard, of all that I have known,
Would render earth a cheerless dwelling-place,
And make my path so desolate and lone.
Return, dear face, return, sweet voice, and bring
The brightness and melodies of Spring.

A Blossom of the Sea

TO OLIVE.

I HELD as vain, when ancient sages taught,
That yonder limpid far-revolving sphere,
Whose twinkling beams in ether realms appear,
Could send through deeps of space an impulse fraught
With mystic, subtle potency that wrought
The will of destiny on mortals here,
Throughout their lives determined their career,
And prompted every secret wish and thought.

No more I disbelieve; for o'er my soul
Thy subtle spell has come that, near or far,
On Noontide's heights, or in the Vale of Dream,
O'er all my being holds a sway supreme.
How can I doubt that other heavenly star,
For this does every thought and wish control?

TO CLARA.

AS ONE who standing on the ocean shore
Where to his feet are in succession rolled
Translucent billows fraught with sunset gold
That seem to float from Heaven's open door
Must feel the spell of rapture more and more
The longer he their glory shall behold,
Till soul and sense in fetters they enfold,
And he can naught but tremble and adore,

So vainly I thy magic spell withstand;
For more and more thy fairy arts enthrall,

And Other Poems

Till, heart and soul enchanted, I confess
A passing touch of thy caressing hand,
A whispered word that from thy lips may fall,
Can make or mar my lasting happiness.

TO VIVIAN.

I ASKED my heart, that beats accord with thine,
What if we twain no more for aye should meet;
Ne'er dreaming such could be, this heart of mine
Grew silent at the thought and ceased to beat.
I asked my soul if gone were its delight,
Thy kindred soul, would it thy loss deplore;
It shuddered, plumed a sudden wing for flight
To leave its mortal cell for evermore.

If we no more may wander hand in hand,
If we no more may hold communion sweet
And read a thought as unexpressed command,
If heart to heart no more responsive beat,
I care not when the gates of life reclose,
Nor in what deep of Lethe I repose.

TO MARGARET.

AS ONE who roaming on a pathless sea
His bark has guided by one star alone,
Whose radiant beams upon the billows thrown
Have been his constant light of destiny,

A Blossom of the Sea

Must when, in clouds of dark obscurity,
It disappears, till mists are overblown,
His canvas furl and wait where glooms unknown
And moaning winds and heaving waters be;

So I, who centred every wish and thought
On thee, and ever found thy smile a guide,
Thy word an inspiration true, nor sought
Nor even wished another heaven beside
Thy presence, now deplore the bonds of Fate
And longing for thy early coming wait.

TO AILEEN.

WITH vestal veil from glowing brow withdrawn,
'Mid floating mists and ebon clouds of night
That faintly shroud her arms and bosom white,
Betimes appears the Angel of the Dawn
And swiftly spreads o'er waiting wood and lawn
The wonder of her all-pervading light,
Till glooms and shadows far have taken flight
And Night and all his darkneses are gone.

So comes Aileen, the angel of my heart,
A gladsome vision, down the winding stair,
Her beaming brow with loosened tresses crowned
That float and fold her perfect form around;
Then, at her magic presence, Gloom and Care
With all their haunting minions soon depart.

And Other Poems

TO KATIE.

Wireless Telegraphy.

FLUNG from uplifted tower, on pulsing air
In viewless waves, our winged words we send
Across unmeasured deeps of distance, where
Accordant keys alone can comprehend:
Unfettered, unconfined by Time or Place,
Can hearts be so attuned that every thought
May wing its way across the deeps of Space
And instant by according mind be caught?

It needs must be: else in the silent night,
Or even 'mid the busy tasks of day,
Why do I hear thy voice in whispers light
The message of thy soul to mine convey?
Annulling Time; o'erleaping Space, to me
Thy heart-waves come, howe'er remote thou be.

TO MAUD.

AY, JEALOUS am I when my eyes behold
The passing breezes wanton with each tress
That fain my fingers would alone caress,
And interweave its brown with twilight gold.
When thou art bent o'er lily snowy cold
And it uplifts a stealthy hand to press
Thy cheek of morning flushes, I confess
My jealous bosom rages uncontrolled.

A Blossom of the Sea

Again, whene'er I see so fondly pressed
Some fragrant rose's dewy lips to thine,
Or when the stars, the eyes of angels, shine
The brighter at thy glances, in my breast
A torrent tosses like a troubled sea—
So deep, so fond, so mad, my love for thee.

And Other Poems

THE BESSEMER, No. 2.

Lake Erie, December 7, 1910.

FIERCE wrath had darkened heaven's face,
And Night her blackest pall had cast
Where billows, caught in dread embrace,
Were struggling with the frenzied blast.
Across contending waves of death
A steel-clad courser takes its way,
Whose heart-deep groans and hissing breath
The fierceness of the strife betray.
With heart of fire and nerves of steel,
With throbbing veins of rushing blood,
With roll and toss, with plunge and reel,
It battles with the raving flood.
But bitter blew the blast and cold,
And whirling spume and flying sleet
Congealed and clung till fold on fold
It fettered like a winding-sheet.
Then with a roar, as if on high
The dome of God were cleft and rent
And down were crashing star and sky,
Both maddened Wave and Tempest bent
Their blows upon its panting side;
And one huge mass upon it fell,
As if the demon, heaven-denied,
Had issued from his nether hell

A Blossom of the Sea

And, tearing from its native bed
Some jutting crag, aloft had swung,
And on the courser, as it sped,
The mountain mass in fury flung.
Broke heart of fire, snapped nerves of steel,
Burst throbbing veins of rushing blood;
With roll and toss and plunge and reel
It sank beneath the heaving flood.
The skies assumed a darker frown:
With dismal shriek and sullen roar
Where sank the gallant courser down
Fought Wave and Tempest as before.

When came the crash nine men resigned
Their task below and gained the deck,
And, undeterred by wave or wind,
Half-clad escaped the shattered wreck.
The oars with willing hands they plied,
But knew not where the prow to turn;
With starless sky and tossing tide
No homeward way could they discern.
But cold and bitter blew the blast,
And flying foam and cutting sleet
Congealed and clung and slowly glassed
Their forms in icy winding-sheet.
They called: the Tempest mocked their cries.
They thought of home and wife and cot,
And lifted hands to sullen skies
And prayed; but Heaven heard them not.

And Other Poems

Yet Death was kind: for soon grow dumb
Their pleading lips, and heart and brain,
As fast their limbs congeal, become
To anguish deadened and to pain.
Visions arise of perils past,
Of greeting wife, of hearth aglow
With warmth, of restful couch at last
And grateful slumber stealing slow
O'er wearied limbs, until there seems
On marble face, in staring eyes
The joy of those that see, in gleams
Afar, The Land of Glad Surprise.

When morning breaks, the sun beams cold
On waves that heave with muffled roar,
Where frozen forms yet firmly hold
In rigid hands the useless oar.
Each in his place still forward leans,
As if his frosted eyes the Maze
Of Dark had pierced that ever screens
The Future from our mortal gaze.

If martyrs faithful to their creeds
May wing their way to Heav'n through flame,
May not those faithful in their deeds
A like reward through suff'ring claim?
If e'er in duty failed they aught
Are they not purified by pain?
Have they not well the battle fought
And shall they not the Haven gain?

A Blossom of the Sea

A LESSON.

I FLUNG me down amid a cypress shade
And muttered in my bitter gloomy mood:
"What profit in a kindly deed or good?
The wrong, the right,—and why distinction made?
The wrong is soon forgiven or forgot;
The right unseen, or swift remembered not."

But, as I spoke, a vile, envenomed worm
Came crawling through the rubbish foul and dank.
Though often out of sight the creature sank,
Yet up again the horrid shape would squirm:
Though coiled and hidden under leafage fair,
I knew the lurking horror still was there.

Then fell through parted leaves a beam of light
And dropped beside my feet a round of gold.
Though high I heaped the filth-polluted mould,
I could not dim nor hide the beam from sight:
And leaf and tinted bloom upon it laid
Were flushed to life and more enchanting made.

And Other Poems

THE PASSING YEAR.

A CHILD in ermined robes she came
And swept on sledges gliding swift
Adown the sloping winter drift
Till flushed her cheek with tinted flame;
Or, cut in curves the frozen flood
Till, flashing from her downy hood,
Her eyes with laughter brimming stood.

When fluted music filled the wold,
A maiden now and stately grown,
In gown of green and loosened zone,
Beside the woodland brook she strolled;
Or, on its margin couch reclined,
And fragrant wreath or garland twined
Her locks of sunlit brown to bind.

In mantle bright with harvest hues,
With sober matron step she went
Where orchard boughs o'erladen bent
With crimson cups of cooling dews;
Or, through the ripened valleys paced,
And oft her golden girdle graced
With drooping ears in cluster placed.

A Blossom of the Sea

But now, when dusky mellow haze
Bedims her sight, she sets aglow
Her maple torch and, crouching low,
Surveys her robes of other days;
But finding every treasured gown
And garland faded, torn and brown,
With broken sigh she lays them down.

Ah! needless all adornments now!
For soon her busy hands will rest
Upon her still, white-shrouded breast,
And pallor clothe her dreamless brow:
The closing scene is nearing fast;
Full soon are hers the chambers vast
And shadow valleys of the Past.

And Other Poems

TO A FRIEND.

HOW can the worth of friendship be portrayed?
Though man has measured mountains heaven-
crowned,
In ocean's darkest deep the plummet laid,
Has tracked the glowing planet's whirling round,
In balance set the far-off burning sphere,
He yet the worth of faithful friend sincere
Can never mete with rod, with plummet sound,
Nor weigh with nicest poise of balanced scale,
Nor spy with crystal lenses that unveil
The limpid worlds in azure deeps profound.

Thy presence brings a gentle, steady light
However dark the shadows that impend,
A stronger inspiration for the right,
A purer zeal for being's nobler end,
While baser aspirations all depart:
When absent, still thy memory in my heart
A presence is from evil to defend
Lest mute reproof in thine eyes may be.
In long communion thou hast been to me
That best of Heaven's gifts, a perfect friend.

A Blossom of the Sea

And shall I then thy merits tribute give,
Or hesitate to speak deserved praise?
Until beloved ones have ceased to live
Too oft their due the tardy tongue delays,
Then mutters praise to senseless ears of death.
Nay, rather, while the bosom's quickened breath
The joy of commendation yet betrays,
While yet a glow can flush the conscious cheek
And light the eye responsive, let me speak
Ere silence on my lip her finger lays.

And Other Poems

FALLING STARS.

THE merry baby angels
Make little glowing stars,
And tripping to the gateway
Out-fling them through the bars.

They laugh to see them falling
With shining trails of light,
As you and I may see them
On any summer night.

They sink in limpid waters,
On golden couches lie,
And mock the merry glances
Of comrades in the sky.

But some from vernal mosses
Their blossom heads upraise
And stand in dreamless moonlight
With dewy breasts ablaze,

Till, winged with heaven-longing,
They seek their natal sky,
And faded garments only
Among the mosses lie.

But still on cloudless midnights
They crowd the vaulted blue
And twinkle loving glances
And messages to you.

A Blossom of the Sea

FAIRY LAND.

SILENTLY from azure heaven
Wing the flakes of snow,
Whirling, floating, softly lighting,
Like the falling leaves of autumn
Earthward sinking slow.
Hung with dainty lawns and laces,
Spruce and cedar boughs are bending
Till their taper tips are resting
On the sward below.

Earth becomes a marble palace—
Marble pavements 'neath the feet,
Marble colonnades and arches
Passing wildest dream of artist
Everywhere the vision meet;
Where before were shrubs and hedges
Now are marble shrines and grottoes
Carved in Arabesque fantastic,
Every spray and leaf complete.

As the evening sun ere setting
Flings o'er all his golden spell,
Hand and hand two little maidens
Wandering in this realm of splendor
Feel a joy no lip can tell.

And Other Poems

As they pass the snowy grottoes,
One whose inmost soul is beauty
To her younger sister whispers,
"This is where the fairies dwell."

Seeing all this grace and splendor
None of us can understand,
Not in error was the maiden
In her pretty childhood fancy
When she deemed it Fairy Land.
Such enchanting forms of beauty,
Chastely planned and deftly moulded,
Prove there is a Mind of Beauty
And a more than mortal Hand.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE ROBINS.

AS A fragrant breath from a mead afar
There came to the robins a whisper low
As they slept and dreamed under southern star,
"The fairies are lifting the veils of snow,
Blithe April is coming in flowery car
And the Dawns are setting the world aglow."

They freighted their air-borne ships at night
And breasted the waves of the upper blue;
They set their sails by the Northern Light
And steered where the lure of the homeland drew;
And their glad hearts thrilled as they hove in sight,
As the heart must thrill if the heart be true.

And now, in the shelter of evergreen boughs,
In the twilight hush of the dying day
They whisper their secrets and plight their vows:
They sing in the morning their hearts away
As the waking world with a call they rouse
To rejoice in life and be glad as they.

SONGS

And Other Poems

A SONG.

ANTICIPATION.

O COME, for the light
Is low on the hill,
And, far away, Night
Is lingering still.

Be nigh when the flush
Of daylight departs,
That the calm and the hush
May quiet our hearts.

O stay till the stars
At the sky-lattice stand
Unfolding the bars
With flame-lighted hand.

Enclasp me once more
As a dove to thy breast,
My locks as of yore
By thy fingers caressed.

Then gaze in my eyes
Till my soul thou shalt see,
For mirrored there lies
But an image of thee.

A Blossom of the Sea

Reclined on thy breast,
Awake yet adream,
Thy lips touch and rest
Light as leaf on a stream.

Their warmth and their glow
Set my being aflame,
As wine-flushes flow
In thrills through the frame.

Dispel not the charm,
For aye let me rest,—
My shelter thy arm,
My heaven thy breast.

And Other Poems

ELAINE.

Dear, dainty Elaine,
Her voice has a strain
Like heart-haunting music of yore;
The sound of her feet
Is like far-echoed beat,
In some fairy retreat,
Of dream-laden wave on the shore.

CHORUS.

This dainty, this fairy Elaine,
The rarest, the sweetest,
The fairest, the neatest,
In grace the completest,
The Edens of earth yet contain.

Like mist-veil withdrawn
From the forehead of Dawn
Seems floating each soft ebon tress;
And her little white hand,
Like a magical wand,
Holds my heart at command
By a touch or a clinging caress.—CHORUS.

If with dim mystic glow,
Like a flame burning low,
They cast but a glance into mine,

A Blossom of the Sea

Her dark-looming eyes
My soul hypnotize
Till submissive it lies,
Or thrills as with flushes of wine.—CHORUS.

Her slow-heaving breast
Is a pillow of rest
With fresh apple bloom swelling high;
And her breath, lightly drawn,
Is the faint air of dawn
That steals on the lawn
From the roses their first waking sigh.—CHORUS.

Her lips once to kiss
Were sufficient of bliss
To compensate for ages of pain,
Could one only forget,
Or cease to regret,
Nor long ever yet
To press them again and again.—CHORUS.

Dear, dainty Elaine,
To be mine would she deign,
Of Earth I should ask nothing more;
And no heaven were fair,
But a realm of despair,
If she were not there,
Forever to love and adore.—CHORUS.

And Other Poems

SONG.

WHEN robins pipe their warning,
Across the dewy lea,
With flushing, fragrant morning
Come sweeter thoughts of thee.

All day the moments winging
In ceaseless, silent flight,
Soul messages are bringing
On passing pinions light.

When from the heaven starlit
The twilight glories fall,
Those dreamy lamps afar-lit
Thy limpid eyes recall.

Thee, when my spirit gazes
Through misty vales of dream,
I see in all the mazes
Of valley, hill and stream.

All joys my heart hath tasted
Seem nothing now to me,
And every moment wasted
Unspent in thoughts of thee.

SONG.

O TURN to me dearest, no longer allow
A frown to enshadow so placid a brow.
Ah, pardon—(for anguish my reasoning drowns)—
So lovely a face cannot darken with frowns.

A Blossom of the Sea

O turn to me dearest and smile once again
To soften my anguish, to banish my pain:
To journey through life if thy smile were withdrawn
Were to roam through a land when the flowers are
gone.

O turn to me dearest, once more let me hear
Thy sweet, mellow tones and thy laugh ringing clear:
No longer to list to thy low whispered word
Were to dwell in a land without streamlet or bird.

O turn to me dearest, to pardon, forgive,
Look kindly again, bid thy suppliant live:
To meet never more the warm glance of thine eye
Were to dwell on an earth with no sun in the sky.

O turn to me dearest, avert not thy face,
'Tis the lodestar of hope in this desolate place:
'Tis the Vision by day, with the beckoning hand;
'Tis the angel I meet in the dim Slumber Land.

O turn to me dearest; thou art, O believe,
The image I kneel to at morn and at eve.
If idolaters never a heaven may see,
No heaven is mine, for I worship but thee.

But thou art to me the one heaven I know,
Sufficient for any fond mortal below;
But, oh, when the earth and its joys are all by,
To what other world will my spirit then fly?

And Other Poems

The fiends from their prison my soul would expel
For loving an angel of heaven too well;
And the angels forever exclude from the throne,
For naught could I worship except thee alone.

SONG.

WHEN down from realms of peerless blue
The vernal suns their glances throw,
Forbid the blooms to wake and lift
Their faces to the genial glow;
Forbid, by day, the constant gaze
That adoration mute declares,—
By night, to veil their vestal brows
And breathe their incense-laden prayers;
And then forbid my soul to be
Entranced and worship only thee.

When winging from the western wave
The rising winds begin to blow,
Forbid the bending bough to sway,
Or fluttering leaf to tremble so;
Forbid the placid, dreaming lake
Its surging billows high to fling,
Or dimple into dainty smiles
When lightly swept by swallow's wing;
And then forbid my heart to thrill
Or throb responsive to thy will.

A Blossom of the Sea

SONG

SHE'S a bright little, slight little maid;
But her hand on my life-harp when laid
Can evoke any strain,
Whether rapture or pain,
A mortal touch ever essayed.

She's a lithe little, blithe little maid;
As a queen's her commands are obeyed:
Nor enslaved though I be
Would I wish to be free,
Or deem that my fetters degrade.

She's a sweet little, neat little maid;
But her eye from the dark ambuscade
Or a low-drooping lash
Such an arrow can flash
As no soul can withstand or evade.

She's a fair little, rare little maid,
And her love from my heart cannot fade;
Angels offer no gain,
Nor the fiends threaten pain,
That my soul from its love can dissuade.

*IN
LIGHTER
VEIN*

And Other Poems

HOW JENNIE CROSSED THE BORDER.

“I’M A LITTLE luckless maiden
Of a poor benighted land
Where the Bird of Freedom never
Comes its pinions to expand.
I shall break my galling fetters,
O’er the border I shall flee
For the full exhilaration
Of the equal and the free.”
Thus within my heart I reasoned,
And persuaded Cousin Joe
To the land of light and freedom
From this slavish land to go.

When at last we reached the border,
There we saw a joyous band
Singing loud to bid us welcome,
“Hail, Columbia, happy land.”
Now they tell me there’s sparkle
In my merry eyes of blue,
On my cheek the flush of roses
When they’re sprinkled with the dew.
Though, of course, I don’t believe them,
Yet my Cousin Joe avers

A Blossom of the Sea

That my face is quite enchanting
When it peeps from fluffy furs.
So I donned a cosy jacket
And a jaunty cap of seal,
With a secret resolution
Hearts of freedom there to steal.
As a handsome lad approached me
In a coat of blue, I fear
That my eyes did slightly sparkle
And a little flush appear.
Oh, but how my pulses fluttered
When he beckoned me aside
With an air that plainly stated
That he wouldn't be denied.
"One request I have, dear maiden,—
Pray refuse me not and scoff,—
Give me——both your cap and jacket,
They're not stamped with 'Pribyloff.'
Here we boast of perfect freedom;
Freely therefore I declare,
If our country you would enter,
Foreign furs you must not wear."
Then I felt the breath of freedom
(It was ten degrees below)
Standing minus cap and jacket
On the platform in the snow,
For he gathered up my garments,
Turned and coldly left me there.
(Surely when they bought Alaska
Home they brought the Russian Bear.)

And Other Poems

Then the group around the station
Sang aloud another strain—
Loud and long they sang exultant
And we caught the glad refrain—
" 'Tis the star-spangled banner, O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Then I thought: "I'm yet a stranger;
This the only way may be
That this people have of making
Others *feel* completely free.
Calmly bear the slight discomfort:
Surgeons often cure with pain;
Custom makes us hug our fetters;
Great may be the final gain."

Then I grew quite philanthropic:
I would nurse them in their ills;
So I donned a cap and apron
And a dainty cap and frills.
Scarce I entered on my duties
When arrived Inspector Byrne.
I was summoned to his presence
And he gave me such a turn—
For he turned me off and sent me
Packing home the morrow morn,
Saying, "We allow no nurses,—
None except the native born."

Worse than mine was Joe's adventure.
When the great inspector learned

A Blossom of the Sea

Joe had found a situation,
He was summoned too and "Byrned."
Proud the great inspector's bearing,
Noble were his words and grand:
"Pole, Italian or Hungarian
Shall be welcome to our land;
But the alien from the border,
Man or maiden though it be,
Never shall be free to labor
In the country of the free."

Long again broke in the music
And our souls were thrilled and stirred,
As in grand triumphant chorus
Swelling high and clear we heard:
"My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring."

Joe and I then started homeward
(Which we couldn't well avoid),
But somehow upon the journey
Both were more than overjoyed.
"Well," said I to Joe, "hereafter
Canada's the home for me,
Where they don't *sing* much of freedom,
But where men are truly free;

And Other Poems

Where a man wears what he pleases
If it's good in heaven's sight;
Where a man is free to labor,
Or do anything that's right;
Where the laws are fair and equal,
Justice never tarries long,
Strong and swift to guard the upright,
Swift and sure to punish wrong;
Where the hand of legislator
Never sways at touch of gold
While our private rights and public
Are for favor bought and sold;
Where a theft is simply *stealing*,
If the theft be great or small,
Though it bear the seal and sanction
Of a legislative hall;
Where a mighty corporation
Cannot buy a tyrant's chain
That will fetter honest rivals
In the hurried race for gain;
Where the struggling rush for riches
Has not strangled heart and soul;
Where the claims of God and justice
Still are felt and still control;
Where uprightness is an honor
And dishonesty a blight;
Where successful craft and cunning
Do not pass for truth and right.
Therefore, Joe, the Land of Maples
Shall in future be my home;
While a roof affords me shelter
Never shall I further roam."

A Blossom of the Sea

To a subject patriotic,
Though my words are most sublime,
Joe will never give attention
Twenty minutes at a time.
"Well," he said, "about the country
You and I can both agree;
There I own a little cottage,—
Won't it do for you and me?"

Wasn't that a mean advantage?
What could helpless maiden say?
I'll not tell you all the story,
But I did not say him nay.
With a kind of roguish twinkle
'Neath his drooping lid concealed,
Joe remarked that every bargain
To be valid must be sealed.
"Certainly," said I, "the parting
With my furs has cost me pain;
I'll be only too delighted
To be quickly 'sealed' again."

This is how I crossed the border
To a free and happy land.
Look beside the maples yonder,
There you'll see our cottage stand.
Though of course I don't believe him,
Yet my husband, Joe, avers
Someone's face is quite enchanting
In these cosy, fluffy furs.

And Other Poems

A MORNING'S ADVENTURES WITH AUTOS.

'TWAS a morn of early autumn
When the leaves were faintly brown
That I harnessed Maud and Katie
For a pleasant jaunt to town.
Cousin Jennie sat beside me
In a suit of latest mode,
Maud and Katie beat a music
On the smooth, resounding road.
But a strange unearthly bellow
Suddenly beside us rung,
And we by the startled horses
Almost in the ditch were flung.
By us flashed an automobile;
But from those enthroned therein
Nothing that was sublunary
Might a moment's notice win.
Nose and chin were elevated
As they swept in triumph by,
As if they were aviators
Sailing through the upper sky.
When, half choked with dust and blinded,
I had calmed the frightened pair,
Jennie leaned to me and whispered,
"That's the *automobile air*."

A Blossom of the Sea

When again our team was pacing
At a gentle, steady stride,
Rushing like a maddened demon
We a coming car descried.
In a blur of dust and vapor,
Puffing, buzzing, on it swept.
Disregarding all our signals
They the middle roadway kept,
And with fixed and stolid faces
They the rearing team surveyed,
Wondering why we had presumption
Their dominion to invade.
Such a glance might Jove Olympic
To a crawling earthworm cast
If it dared to turn and wriggle
While he crushed it as he passed.
As they vanished in the distance,
When again had cleared the air,
Jennie leaned to me and whispered,
"That's the *automobile stare*."

Soon, as we a hill ascended,
On a narrow road and steep,
Came a car behind approaching,
Struggling hard and panting deep.
Since there wasn't room to pass us
And we couldn't reach the top,
They were forced to slow their engine
And, through loss of speed, to stop.
While they yanked and cranked to start it,
We proceeded on our way.

And Other Poems

Oft a single glance betokens
More than language can convey ;
And if glance could scorch and wither
As a burning furnace blast,
By their glance we had been shriveled
When again they glided past.
We had too much self-composure
For their angry look to care ;
Jennie merely leaned and whispered,
"That's the *automobile glare*."

Gaily then we trotted onward
Till the town at last we neared,
When a busy group before us
Gathered round a car appeared.
Ladies sat as patient martyrs
On the roadside bank of green
While their partners, grim and dusty,
Tinkered at the stalled machine.
One was peering at the spark-plug,
One the battery overhauled,
One with pincers, wrench and hammer
Underneath the car had crawled.
They with bruised and blackened fingers
Tested wire and tightened screw,
While, forgetful of the ladies,
Hot and fast the curses flew.
As we trotted by and left them
Loading sulphur on the air,
Jennie leaned again and whispered,
"That's the *automobile swear*."

A Blossom of the Sea

A STIRRING SCENE.

AUTUMN hushed the world to silence
While September night and morn
Flung a haze of golden glory
On the emerald seas of corn.
Streamlets crept with drowsy murmur
Mazy dell and meadow through;
Fairy fingers nightly penciled
Forest leaf with dainty hue.
Straggling bees from blooms belated
Added to their amber hoard;
Mellow sunbeams wines and sweetness
In the flushing apple stored.

Evening's hush lay on the meadows;
Clacking doors and ringing calls
Told where lads their weary horses
Guided to their littered stalls.
Now, the muttered low of cattle
Plodding home in straggling train;
Now, the merry voice of milkmaid
Faintly echoed down the lane.

But where yonder blushing maples
Half the ample house conceal,
Katie Lee stands making porridge
Of the golden Indian meal.

And Other Poems

Katie, queen of rural beauties ;—
Katie, in whose dreamy eye
Brimming worlds of lurking mischief
'Neath her drooping lashes lie ;—
Katie of the wavy tresses
Floating down like twilight haze,
Tangling hearts in stronger meshes
Than the artful hunter lays ;—
Katie of the dainty dimples
Faint by fairy touch impressed ;—
Katie of the heart the truest
Beating in the human breast.

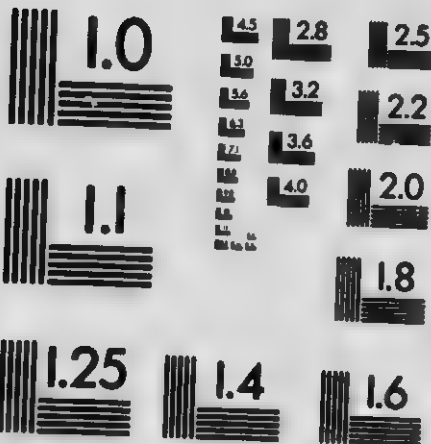
As from Katie's busy fingers
Fell the streaming sands of gold,
It just happened Willie Watson
Down the grassy pathway strolled
To the quiet room and, pausing,
Leaned against the open door.
(Katie might, but would not tell you
This "just happened" oft before.)

Scarce a flash of recognition
Katie to the caller threw,
But perhaps her busy fingers
Just a little faster flew.
Yet a form so lithe and stalwart,
Brow and eyes so frank and clear,
Might e'en to a timid maiden
Worth a stolen glance appear.



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A Blossom of the Sea

Gazing at the living picture
As the gloaming shadows fell,
Silence closed his lips and held him
Fettered by a magic spell.
Passing strange that Willie Watson,
Gayest lad in home or field,
First in merriment or jesting,
Felt his lips by silence sealed!

Still her lashes were unlifted,
Still she uttered not a word,
But the seething, bubbling porridge
With increasing vigor stirred.
Half indignant, half reproachful,
Willie murmured with a sigh,
"Katie, so that pot of porridge
More attractive seems than I?"
"Yes," the maid replied in accents
Sweet as tinkling waterdrops,
"This is very entertaining:
This not only *sighs* but *pops*."

Once again 'tis mild September;
Passing months have swiftly flown;
Yonder's Katie stirring porridge
In a cottage of her own.

And Other Poems

THE LETTER.

PERUSING this letter I fancy
Her low, winning tones I can hear;
The exquisite snow of its pages
I deem like her bosom sincere.

Round her brow, of a beauty immortal,
As she leant loving words to indite,
Her dark, loosened locks may have floated
Like shadowing mists of the night.

Here, also, her eyes must have rested,
Whose soul-melting ardor divine
Can thrill all the depths of my being
When they flash but a glance into mine.

When I think how her dear, dainty fingers
The pen have enclasped, or would press
The paper with soft fairy touches,
I long for that clasp and caress.

When I think that, when written, the maiden
To seal it would possibly deign
To touch with her lips the enclosure,
I wish,—but all wishes are vain.

A Blossom of the Sea

THE YANTIC.

LITTLE Canada, my dear, won't you kindly lend
an ear
To your neighbor, Uncle Sam? And a loving one I am;
And you know I love you more
Than a daughter!
I'm a mighty clever one! I'm the bravest 'neath the
sun!
I'm Achilles,—just about,—if you reckon on my shout!
But you'll kindly let me stand with my feet on solid
land,
As I'm shaky when I go
On the water.

I have built a mighty boat, but the tarnal thing won't
float.
If I venture on the sea, where a vessel ought to be,
It's surprising how she makes
A commotion.

For she'll bump against the ground, or cavort and roll
around,
Like that barrel boat, away in your own Toronto bay,
Till I tremble in my bones lest I go to Davy Jones
If I venture any more
On the ocean.

And Other Poems

If in harbor she remains, she will break her anchor
chains,

And will dash against the pier, or among the vessels
near,—

For destruction, as you know,

Is her mission.

When the other ships have fled, she will bang herself
instead

Upon any handy rocks. As I really haven't docks,

If she suffers more attacks she may go to—Halifax,

Where I hope they'll soon improve

Her condition.

If I had her on the shore, then she'd trouble never
more;

On her decks would I parade, flash aloft my shining
blade,

While I everlastingly

Made my jaw go.

Now, I really think I could make a man-of-war of
wood,

Like that painted thing I had which I called an ironclad

(By the way, you saw it there when you came to my
a—Fair),

Like that terror, *Illinois*,

At Chicago.

But I have a wooden brig, that is not so tarnal big,
Neither carries iron plate quite enough to sink her
straight—

A Blossom of the Sea

As I said, I have a brig
 Called the Yantic.
Now, right up through your "canawl" mayn't I the
 vessel haul?
I'll just take her up and keep where the water isn't
 deep.
When I've practised there my trade, till no longer I'm
 afraid,
Then perhaps I'll try again
 The Atlantic.

And Other Poems

JONATHAN AND I.

(Not Jonathan and David.)

JONATHAN and I are neighbors,
And our farms lie side by side,
Mine extending to the northward,
His to southward sloping wide.
These from savage wildernesses
Years ago our father won,
Fenced them safely and accomplished
All a father should have done.

I am yet a younger brother
Farming in my father's name;
But I sow whatever suits me
And the harvest fully claim.
Once he did the same; but wishing
Owner of his farm to be,
On refusal he grew angry,
Sulked and *wouldn't take his tea*.
Then he made it so unpleasant,
For he had defiant grown,
That for sake of family concord
He received it as his own.
This success, I think, has taught him
To assume presumptuous airs,

A Blossom of the Sea

For he now is interfering
With his older friends' affairs.
Go he would and dine with Cuba,
Much against her mother's will;
Her bananas and tobacco
Suit his stomach rather ill.
True, he won the dusky maiden,
With her rather vulgar ways;
Took with her a "*philopena*,"*
And he now the forfeit pays.

Jonathan will let his children
Come at will and play with mine;
Yet if mine his lands but enter
He escorts them to the line.
His may search my lands and, delving,
Bear away their precious gains;
Mine from his may seek no treasure,
For his own he all retains.
Jonathan would cross and freely
Take the timber from my lands;
But if I prepare and bring it
He a heavy toll demands.
I to eastward have a fishpond;
On the fish he casts his eye,
And would come and freely hook them,
Though unwilling them to buy.
He to westward has an island
Where the furry seals abound,

*The Philippines.

And Other Poems

But he seeks to hinder hunting
For a hundred miles around.
And, in fact, although in friendship
Many proffers I have made,
Yet, except at an advantage,
With me he will never trade.

Both have distant back-lots: neither
Knows exactly where's the line,
But he claims the only roadway
Leading to those lands of mine.
I to Jonathan suggested,
After converse vainly spent,
We should leave it to a neighbor,
But to this he'll not assent.
"Come," said I, "now toss up even."
"Very well," he said. "Now choose,"
Winking as he tossed the copper;
"*Heads*, I win, and *tails*, you lose."
I have more than grave suspicion
Thus he hinders that he may
Toll and share the precious products
Of my acres far away.

Though upon his ample acres
Jonathan has wealthy grown,
I can too be independent,
Live and flourish on my own.
Just across the stretch of water
In his castle father dwells,

A Blossom of the Sea

And I draw to him the closer
As my neighbors more repels.
Jonathan has often hinted
We no longer should be two;
If successful, he must practise
Some more winning way to woo.
I shall neither vex nor coax him,
I shall never kneel, but stand,
Not for union, but for friendship,
Ready with an equal's hand.

And Other Poems

JOHN BULL AND SON SAM.

WELL, my Sammy, so I find
You have fully set your mind
On a tussle with this naughty Spanish lad,
Who too long has had abode
In the house across the road,
Where they say his conduct's everything that's bad.
For a greedy hand he'll set
Upon all his servants get;
And if any of them venture to resist,
He regards nor age nor sex,
Nor of consequences recks,
But they feel the force and frown of his fist.
When remonstrances you made,
To the suffering lent your aid,
Then you say he smashed and sank your boat for
spite.
'Twas a scurvy trick, if true;
And, my lad, if I were you
I should,—but of course it's very wrong to fight.
I'm a very peaceful man,
And I live so when I can,
But I keep my hand in practice all the same:
Those that most a fight desire

A Blossom of the Sea

Oft will gracefully retire
When they find one ready waiting for the game.

I am more a man of peace
As the weight of years increase,
But I've done a bit of fighting in my time.
With the father of this lad
Many scimmages I had,
And I banged him in the Channel in his prime.

He is of a cruel race;
By a trail of blood you'll trace
Every pathway that his feet have ever trod.
Here he robbed in days of old,
Plundered princes of their gold,
Blighting all the country as a vengeful god.

Bang him as I banged him, son;
You can do as I have done;
You are treading closely in your father's path:
You've an arm that's quick and strong,
You've a heart that hates a wrong,
And such tyranny awakens all your wrath.

You can strike a sturdy blow,
As your father learned to know,
And your brethren to the same can testify.
In domestic brawls, my son,
You have some distinction won,
But with strangers now the issue you must try.

And Other Poems

When the fight you once begin,
Fight with fury and to win;
Take advice from one that's found his method sound:
Bang him quick and bang him hard
Till his heels fly heavenward
And his ugly head goes bumping on the ground.

Thump him hard between the eyes;
And before you let him rise
Make him promise soon the region to forsake.
Lick the rascal right away;
After licking, make him pay
For the trouble you have been obliged to take.

With your father's blessing
Trounce again our ancient foe,
Let us never see his hateful face again.
I'll be standing somewhere near
So that none may interfere
Till you've bounced him bag and baggage back to
Spain.

A Blossom of the Sea

GOLFING ON THE GREEN.

WHEN the winter snows have vanished
From the valley and the hill,
When the throbbing pulse of nature
Sends through every heart a thrill,
When the maple leaflets peeping
From their winter homes of brown
Wave their tiny flags to welcome
Spring from heaven coming down,
When the tender blades upspringing
On the meadow bare are seen,
Then the bag of clubs we shoulder
And go golfing on the green.

Life and vigor come to muscle
From the "driver" swinging free;
There's elation in the "gutta"
As it rushes from the "tee;"
To the step there comes a lightness
And a brightness in the eyes.
He that never ceases golfing
Is the man who'll never die;
For to breathe the breezy freshness
That the swelling bosom fills
Is a quite sufficient tonic
For the worst of human ills.

And Other Poems

You may play it in your boyhood,
You may play it when you're old,
You may play it in the tropics,
You may play it where it's cold;
As regards the world above us,
I may truthfully declare
That I never heard it stated
That they do not play it there.
But I'm certain when our captain
In that other world we see
He'll be clinging to his driver
Hunting sand to make a "tee."

Ye that learn the game of golfing
Learn for life some lessons too;
Learn to take its fronting "hazards"
With a steady stroke and true;
Take its "bunkers" with composure;
Do not fret when overthrown;
When you count your comrade's errors
Learn as well to count your own;
Learn to trust a comrade's honor,
And be honest in your play;
Never stoop to put a "stymie"
In a struggling brother's way.

Ye that love the game of golfing
Nor its pleasures can forsake,
In this winding earthly journey
Ponder well the path you take.

A Blossom of the Sea

If your way be ever upward,
As you ever higher rise,
There a pleasant "course" awaits you
On a "green" beyond the skies.
There are fairer hills and meadows
Than the eye has ever seen;—
But among the smoke and sulphur
There's no golfing on the green.

And Other Poems

ULYSSES.

METHOUGHT I sat upon the craggy shore
Of Ithaca, when straying on the beach
Came one in garb of ages long ago,
With ample shoulders broad and bent with toil,
Whose brown and weather-beaten face betrayed
Long strife with storm and wind, and where the breeze
Parted his robe were many seamèd scars.
A Viking of the North he might have been,
A Spanish rover of the western main,
A king returned from those far early days
When martial fame was virtue's only meed.
When guile and treachery were arts of war
And pity to a fallen foe unknown,
When strangers all were foes, and battle just
Whenever battle promised hope of gain.

He leaned against a shattered, fallen rock
And told his tale, at times with voice subdued
And falling tears, at times with frenzied wrath
And all the lust of battle in his eye:

"I stood upon the shores of fallen Troy,
Hard beaten by the tread of many feet,
Where dragging down their dusky-bosomed ships
My eager comrades labored zealously,

A Blossom of the Sea .

Weary with war and sick with thoughts of home.
At last in rocking ships, in order set,
With oar and sail we cleft the hoary sea,
Each glad bark straining to the distant west,
Where lay the little barren, rocky isle,
The lonely hearth, and lonely child and wife.

"Athwart our course uprose a southern blast
And swept our barks to far Ciconian land.
The weak are lawful prize; for who by craft
Or strength devises not a meet defense,
Or lacks god-given courage, needs must be
The slave of better men. We disembarked,
Greedy for gain and captive fair and spoil
To fill our long-neglected island home.
Not to return at last with barren hands,
We fell upon the ill-defended town
And bore its wealth and shrieking dames away.
Advancing from the inland warriors came,
As many as are forest leaves in spring,
Well skilled to battle in the brazen car.
From dawn to dusky eve the armor clashed;
Then beaten, we forsook the bitter fray.
We left our dead, thrice calling each in vain,
Regained our waiting barks and southward fled.

"Then frowning Jove with vast embattled clouds
Palled earth and sea with thickest glooms of night,
And smote and rent the sails with whirlwind wrath.
Nine days he drove us o'er the dismal deep,

And Other Poems

When longing eyes discerned the Lotos Land,
Whose meads were grateful to our wearied limbs.
Anxious to seek the homes of mortal men
I sent along the shore a chosen band,
Who found a people eating flowery food,
Of war unmindful, plotting ill to none.
Freely they gave them of their honeyed blooms,
And straight forgotten were the leader's hest,
Desire of home, and thought of swift return.
Content they rested, eating lotos fruit,
Until I, with a father's yearning heart,
Regardless of their tears and wailings loud,
Bore off and bound them in my benched ships,
Till drugged and deadened hearts should beat again
And torpid bosoms warm with love of home.

"Again we beat the deep to hoary foam,
And reached a land of vales and mountains vast,
Within whose lofty caverns giants dwell,
Who neither sow nor till, but garner free
Whatever grain the bounteous vales produce,
And press their purple wines from clusters rich
That Jove has ripened with his sun and shower.
In night and gloom we landed on the shore,
But at the touch of rosy-fingered Dawn
The shadows fled. Afar we heard the bleat
Of sheep and goat and voice of giant men,
Huge, lawless, and regardless of the gods.

"One near his cave we saw, vast as some cliff
That overpeers his fellow mountain peaks;

A Blossom of the Sea

His staff a lofty fir, of branches bared,
Snatched from the springing grove beside his path.
Upon a grassy ledge he lay reclined
And slept unmindful of his countless flocks.
Eager a gift of friendship to obtain,
Twelve worthy comrades from the ship I chose
And in the cave awaited his return.
At eve he came and crashed upon the earth
His faggots dry, and cared for all his flocks,
Then barred secure the door with massive rock.
In terror at the monster huge and fierce
To far recesses of the cave we fled.
But when the faggots blazed, regarding not
The rights of strangers, nor the gods on whom
We called, he rushing came, and clutching twain
He dashed them fiercely on the rocky hearth.
Then like a lion, mountain-born, he fed,
Rending their tender limbs with mouthings loud,
Till gorged at last he slept among his sheep.
But when at morn, and yet again at eve,
The greedy giant slew his shrinking prey,
With guile we gave him soul-subduing wine;
And while he lay supine in drunken sleep
We pierced with kindled bar his cruel eye.
Then loud the monster bellowed in his pain
And roared till all the mighty cavern rang
And woke the echoes of the sleeping crags.
When Morning touched the ruddy hills with light
He moved the barrier for his bleating flocks,
And, though he at the cavern entrance stood

And Other Poems

And blindly groped with wide-extended hands,
We fled concealed among his fleecy sheep,
The fattest of his flock we drove away,
Regained our waiting bark; and, when I thought
We rode secure the heaving deep, I mocked
The sightless monster. He with frenzy wild
Broke off the beetling crags and hurled them high
And far, and sought to crush us in our ships
Or overwhelm us in the tumult of the waves.
But foiled, he raised his hands and sightless eye
To heav'n and prayed that we might never reach
Our native isle, or I alone and late should come
To troubled home. And Neptune heard his prayer.
Thus we escaped, our comrades' loss avenged,
But Neptune's never-dying wrath aroused
In blinding thus his son. So hard it is
For man to live and not offend the gods.

"Sadly and gladly onward then we sailed
And reached the floating isle of Eolus,
The lord of winds. He pent the adverse blasts
Within a sack entrusted to my care,
And gave a gentle breeze to bear us home.
Nine days we sailed. We saw our native land
Loom in the distance, when, o'ercome with toil,
I dropped the rudder. Sleep relaxed my soul.
Then my companions in their greed for gold,
Deeming that I had treasure hid therein,
Unloosed the leathern sack. The adverse blasts
Escaped and swept us far from native land.

A Blossom of the Sea

O would the boisterous wave had gulfed me deep
Ere I became the guide to foolish men!

"Six days we sailed both day and night, and came
To Læstrygonian land. Here also dwelt
A giant brood, who slew and then devoured
My herald, crushed my ships with whirling rocks,
And bore my men away, as spitted fish,
To feast upon them in the palace halls.
My ship, the most remote, alone escaped.
Sadly we sailed and left behind, as prey
For maws of giants, comrades dear, who braved
The tempest and the tossing swell, nor found
A deep though never-resting grave; who fought
With gods and heroes on the plains of Troy,
Nor left their corpses in its bloody dust.
O who can know the purpose of the gods,
Avoid their anger or appease their wrath?

"Afar we sailed to Circe's sylvan isle,
A fair-haired goddess, daughter of the Sun,
Who dwelt amid a grove in polished halls.
Adroit she was to weave the graceful web
While chanting notes of soul-alluring song;
Or tame the lion and the mountain wolf
And make them crouch and fawn as playful hounds.
Expert she was, with drugged and honeyed wine
And touch of magic wand, fair, godlike men
To change to groveling swine, that yet retained,
Though couched in sty, the mind and thought of men.

And Other Poems

"But when the hall of Circe I approached,
The golden-wanded Hermes lighted nigh
And gave me moly, black in root, but white
In flower. Unharmed I drank the honeyed wine,
Unchanged I stood when touched with magic wand.
Amazed that all her potent charms were vain,
She kindly grew, and gave me goodly robes,
And placed me on a silver-studded throne,
Restored my comrades, gave them cloaks of wool,
With pleasant viands, rich and ruddy wine.

"But Circe, comely, graceful and divine,
Had other subtle charms and magic wiles
That even moly could not counteract.
Her beauty wove a spell about my heart,
Her songs were soothing to my saddened soul,
Her voice had music in its whispered tone,
Her hand more magic than her fairy wand.
Forgetful of my home and native land,
On plea of weariness and needed rest
Enchanted thus I dallied there a year,
Whose hasting moons too swiftly waxed and waned,
Regaled with dainty food and luscious wines,
Within her palace halls of polished stone.

"Again we launched the ship and set our sails,
And reached, at floating ocean's farthest verge,
The dark Cimmerian Land, where shadows brood
And glooms of endless night, where sun at morn,
At noon, nor yet again at evening, sends a ray
To pierce the chaos of eternal dark,

A Blossom of the Sea

Where lie the gates of sombre Erebus
And all the chambers of the cheerless dead.
We hither came in quest of prophet old
To read the dark decrees of rigid Fate
And give us knowledge of the homeward way.
Libations due of honey, wine and meal
We straightway made. I slew the black-fleeced sheep,
Whose dark blood into hollow trench I poured,
Invoking Pluto and Persephone,
The rulers of the joyless Land of Death.
In throngs the strengthless shadows of the dead
Approached and sought to quaff the flowing blood;
And each that quaffed regained his mortal speech.
But foremost of the ghostly legions came
Tiresias, a Theban prophet old,
Who quickly bowed him at the trench and drank.
And when I questioned of my fate he said:
'Thou shalt, though late, in safety yet return,
But greatly suffer on the tossing seas
From wrath of Neptune for his blinded son.
Full sorely grieved is fair Penelope
By haughty suitors feasting in her hall,
Demanding her, a sad, unwilling bride.
Her wrongs thou shalt in bloody wrath avenge
With bitter shaft and ruthless brazen spear.
Then shalt thou dwell at inland palace, far
Removed from heaving billows of the sea;
And after many years, in honored age
Among a people happy made by thee,
Shalt calmly meet the gentle call of Death

And Other Poems

As one who after day of labor long
At evening sinks to rest at dreamless sleep.
He vanished. Then, with anxious, loving glance
That beamed with earthly tenderness and love,
My mother came with hasting steps and drank,
And when I asked of home she sadly said:
'Thy wife is ever faithful. As she plies
The web among her maidens, night and day,
Her eyes at thy delay are wet with tears.
Thy father, bowing low in grief for thee,
By growing age enfeebled, nightly lies
Neglected, clad in filthy, ragged robes,—
In winter, in the dust beside the fire,
In summer, in the leaves amid the vines,
Far from the palace of his absent son.
And I, not smitten by some slow disease,
Not by Diana's gentle arrow slain,
But lonely, ever waiting thee in vain,
From care, regret and love of thee have come
To wander in the cheerless realms of Death.'
Her low and plaintive tone, her pallid face
Awoke the dormant mem'ries of my heart.
Thrice I essayed her spirit to embrace,
But thrice it flitted from my clasping arms
Like passing shadow or a fleeting dream.
With tender, mournful eyes she backward glanced,
And, with a sigh as sad as sobbing wind
That wails and moans on lonely winter night,
She shrank away among the ghostly throng.

A Blossom of the Sea

"I saw the spirits of the dames of old,
Mothers of heroes, brides of gods and men:
Alcmene, Leda, Ariadne fair,
And all that won on earth immortal names.
Some, weeping, told their many grievous woes;
Some boasted of the prowess of their sons,
The blameless offspring of the mighty gods.

"Then came my comrades that had fought at Troy.
Though all are joyless in the realms of shade,
Saddest of souls that roam the meads of Death
Came Agamemnon, who, with shrill lament
And dropping tears, bewailed his piteous fate:
By Clytemnestra slain, his wedded wife—
A bitter welcome home from years of war;
Sent from the genial sun and blooming earth,
Before the term of life's allotted days,
With pallid ghosts and incorporeal shapes
To tread the sunless pathways of the dead.

"Then swift Achilles and Patroclus came,
Comrades in life, companions too in death.
But when I marked Achilles' clouded brow,
With winged words the hero I addressed:
'Why art thou sad? None lived so blest as thou,
Nor will there be in after time thy peer.
None equaled thee upon the plains of Troy
In grace of form or strength of mighty arm
To lay the princely Trojans in the dust.
In life, we Greeks adored thee as a god;
And here among the dead thou art a king.

And Other Poems

"Ulysses brave, speak not to me of death:
Better a slave on earth and serve a man
Of no estate, than king and reign supreme
Among the cheerless kingdoms of the dead.
But, since the dead revisit not the earth
Nor know they aught of deeds of mortal men,
Come, tell me of my noble son,—if he,
Though coming late, achieved in glorious war
A chieftain's name; or of my aged sire,
Who, now perchance dishonored and oppressed,
Hath yet no son to ward his waning years."

"Of blameless Peleus nothing had I learned;
But then, because I said his son was brave
And ever fought the foremost in the fray,
Off went Achilles, taking mighty strides,
Joyful, across the meads of asphodel,—
In all the throng the only happy soul."

"And other souls I saw that cherished yet
The thoughts of earth: brave Ajax, angered still
Because Achilles' armor I had won;
Wise Minos judging souls as mortal men;
Orion chasing shades of deer he slew;
And Hercules with mighty bended bow."

"Some saw I too enduring endless pain,
The penalty of grievous deeds on earth.
With greedy beak the vultures ever tore
The breast of Tityus, the giant huge
That seized Latona, bride of mighty Jove."

A Blossom of the Sea

There Tantalus, by famine and by thirst
Tormented, saw abundant luscious fruits
That ever vanished from his eager grasp,
And streamlets cool that ever fled his lip.
There wearied Sisyphus with endless toil
Strove up the steep to heave a stubborn stone;
But ever as the summit he approached
It rolled and tumbled thundering to the plain,
And left him baffled in a cloud of dust.

"But as in myriads yet the shadows came,
And much I feared Persephone might send
A Gorgon head to chill my mortal frame
And drive me down the sombre vales of Death,
I left the clamorous throng and quickly sought
My comrades. Bidding them embark in haste,
With oar and sail we swiftly sped away.

"Again we came to Circe's sylvan isle,
And banqueted on food and purple wine
By comely maidens brought. Beside the ship
My comrades through the dewy darkness slept;
But me enchanting Circe led away
To fragrant secret bower. There meet reply
I made when she with lips divine inquired
Of all my journey to the Land of Death.

She then recounted perils that beset
My homeward way, and how I might escape
And yet in safety reach my native isle.
In converse sweet the calm ambrosial night

And Other Poems

Too swiftly passed; too soon the rosy Dawn
With ruddy fingers drew the veil of Day.
We early rose, embarked and set the mast,
And fair-haired Circe sent a welcome gale
That filled our sails, and cleft the foamy wave
And bore us onward from the happy isle.

"Obedient to her warnings, we escaped
The tuneful tempting of the Sirens' song,
Alluring and so sweet that I myself,
Though bound and fettered, yet by signs implored
My deafened crew to near the fatal shore,
Balancing death with momentary bliss.

"Onward we fled where in a narrow sea
Our course by baleful monsters was beset.
There, while we watched Charybdis gulping down
And belching forth again the boiling wave
With crash and roar of thunder till the foam
Besprent the topmast rock, unseen and swift
The serpent necks of Scylla, bending, seized
My shrinking comrades, who, suspended high,
Struggled and shrieked and stretched imploring hands.
Swung to her craggy cave, with moan and cry
Helpless they died. This saddest sight I saw
In all my wanderings o'er the pathless sea.

"We fled in fear and horror till we reached
The isle of Helios, whose glossy herds
Roamed free and fearless o'er the fragrant meads.
By Circe warned and sage Tiresias,

A Blossom of the Sea

Recounting all their dread prophetic words,
What ruin and disaster would befall
If we should slay the oxen of the god,
I urged my men to drive my bark beyond
The isle, and thus avoid impending Fate.
But recent fears and terror of the night
O'ercame my crew. All swore a mighty oath
The oxen, sleek and fat, broad-browed and black,
Upon the grassy lawn to leave unharmed.
But gnawing hunger broke their solemn vow ;
For, while my eyes were weighed with grateful sleep,
They slew the herds in which the god rejoiced
When wheeling earthward from the fields of Dawn
Or speeding to the starry underworld.

"Then Helios invoked the heavenly gods
And called for vengeance from immortal Jove,
Who sent in wrath a tempest roaring loud,
And hurled a crashing thunderbolt of flame
Upon our shattered ship. The crew, as gulls,
Floated away upon the tumbling waves,
And I alone, on broken keel and mast
Wrenched from the ruined ship, avoided Fate.

"In desperation clinging to the keel,
Escaping dire Charybdis once again,
At length I drifted to the lonely isle
Where fair Calypso dwelt, a goddess dread
That spake with human voice. With kindly words
She led where blazed the hearth within her cave,

And Other Poems

With spice and cedar fragrant. O'er the loom
She bent and blithely sang, and wove the web
With golden shuttle. Round her grotto grew
A cypress grove and vines of cluster rich;
And fountains flowed in cool and limpid streams
Through pleasant meadows fair with fragrant flowers.

"Year after year the moons had waxed and waned
And still I lingered in Calypso's isle,
Deploring Fate and longing for return,
Although she promised me immortal youth
Should I forget my bride Penelope
And dwell in sweet enduring love with her,
A bride immortal, stately and divine.

"Then fair Athene, moved at my distress,
Besought the gods to send a quick release.
Jove gave command, and wingèd Hermes flew
Down high Olympus, o'er Pierian land,
Across the crested wave with Fate's decree.
Calypso then reluctantly obeyed.
In goodly garments clad, with food and wine
She sent me forth upon a well-wrought raft,
Secure I rode till dimly I descried
The misty mountains of Phæacia nigh,
When wrathful Neptune spied my fragile craft
And with his trident tossed the billows high,
Awoke the winds and veiled the sky with night.
Out-flung, I swam and reached the shore and slept,
Exhausted, hidden in a leafy grove.

A Blossom of the Sea

"A shout and merry voices broke my rest.
Nausicaa, the daughter of the king,
A queen of beauty, stately and divine,
Sported among her maidens on the shore.
The maidens fled, like timid frightened doves;
But she for my distress cared tenderly,
Gave soul-reviving wine, ambrosial food,
Warm, comely garments wrought of purple wool,
And kindly guidance to her father's hall.
Within the palace, rich with bronze and gold,
On thrones enrobed by skilful, queenly hand,
Arete sat and kingly Alcinous.
They gave me courteous greeting, gathered all
The princes of the wide Phæacian land,
Prepared a bounteous, equal feast,
Whereat the blind old bard Demodocus
Began to sing of heroes and of Troy.
While thus he sang I bowed my head and wept,
Re-living all the glorious strife again.
The wondering king inquiring why I wept
I told my name and all my bitter woes,
And long desire to reach my native isle.
" 'Fain had I wished,' the goodly king replied,
'That thou wouldst in my palace dwell content
And take my comely daughter as thy bride,
Whose heart thy woes and warlike deeds have won.
But, since thy mind is set on swift return
Where faithful waits thy bride of early youth,
Rich presents shalt thou have and guidance home.'

And Other Poems

"After deep woes and long-endured distress
Fond, tender love is more supremely dear.
Thus Circe's charms had won me for a time,
Thus had the fair Calypso held me long.
Though these were both immortals, goddess-born,
Yet ne'er so tempted was I to forget
My early bride and all my sorrows past
And live secure in palace halls with one
Within whose breast I first had wakened love,—
A maid of kindly heart and prudent mind,
Perfect in form and beautiful in face,
Wearing all charms of maiden innocence.
But thoughts of home and faithful love prevailed,
And I besought immediate guidance hence.
They launched a rocking ship upon the deep;
Then brought they presents rich and numberless
Of bronze and well-wrought gold, and purple cloaks,
And, placing all in order, smote the sea
With shining oars and swiftly sped away.
But soon they reached my little rocky isle
And laid me safe but sleeping on the shore.
Then came Athene, stored my treasure safe
Within a grotto, gave me meet disguise
And prudent counsel, bade me journey first
Where stout Eumæus kept my herd of swine.

"He, faithful found throughout the passing years,
Regarding not my beggar's ragged robe,
Received me kindly and recounted all
The deeds of haughty suitors in my halls,—

A Blossom of the Sea

Their wasting of my substance day by day,
Their insults to my queen Penelope,
Their ambush laid to intercept and slay
Telemachus returning from his quest.
To him I told a fiction interspersed
With truth, of how I came to Ithaca;
And he related how Phenician men
Had borne him from his father's royal dome
And sold him here a slave in foreign land.
Feasting and quaffing purple wines we sat
While fled the night's ambrosial hours away.
But with the morning came Telemachus.
Glad was the welcome that Eumæus gave,
As might a father give a tender son
After long absence home returning safe;
And I rejoiced to see him well-beloved.
But when his lodge the faithful swineherd left
To bear the queen a message from her son
No longer I my feelings could restrain;
But all the longings of my lonely heart
Came swelling as a sea within my breast.
In close embrace I clasped my gallant son,
A helpless babe when twenty years before
I left him smiling in his mother's arms,
But now a youth to cheer a father's heart
With pride and hope. With intermingled tears
We sat while fled the waning hours of day,
Recounting all our many bitter woes
And plotting death for all the suitors proud.

And Other Poems

"With morning sped Telemachus away.
With stout Eumæus to my home I came
In beggar's rags disguised, upon the road
Spurned and insulted by Melanthius,
Who led the fattest of my bleating goats
A savory banquet for the suitors proud.
Argus, my faithful hound, neglected lay,
Unkempt and ill. He rose with plaintive whine,
But sank and died of joy at my return.
Within the palace many a prince and chief
In wild carousal drank my ruddy wine
And feasted on the cattle from my stalls.
Long unrestrained, grown insolent and bold,
Telemachus they treated with disdain;
My queen they pressed against her will to wed;
Her waiting-maids they dragged away and shamed;
They mocked my tattered rags and seeming age;
Denied me food and smote me with their stools;
The burly beggar, Irus, urged to fight.
Him with a blow I crushed; then dragging, flung
Him, gasping, groaning, near the outer gate.

"My prudent queen by stratagem the day
Of choice had long deferred; but now at last
The urgent suitors brooked no more delay
And all refused departure till she wed.
She claimed from each a costly bridal gift,
And promised who should bend my bow and send
A faultless shaft should lead her as a bride.
Loud laughed my heart to see their feeble strength,

A Blossom of the Sea

Their vain attempts, their futile artifice.
I bade them pray for power from the gods
And wait for morn. Then, even where I sat,
I strung the sounding bow and sent a shaft
That hissing sped and passed the ports of steel
And cleft with brazen barb the door beyond.
Then leaping up I shot a bitter shaft
That pierced the throat of vaunting Antinous,
E'en as he quaffed a golden double cup:
Defiled with wine and streaming blood he fell.
Then forth broke all my long-imprisoned wrath;
I taunted them with all their shameless deeds,
And one by one, as wolves, I shot them down.
Then when the arrows failed, with sword and spear,
With loud triumphant shout, I smote them low;
I mocked the shrinking cowards in their death,
And gloated o'er their dying agonies.
Not one I spared. In heaps upon the floor
They lay like netted fish upon the beach.
Sweet is revenge to wrong-embittered soul!

"The aged matron warned Penelope,
Who, as I sat beside the brazier, came,
More stately, more divinely beautiful
Than when I brought her home a virgin bride.
In silence, now believing, doubting now,
She gazed and strove my image to recall
From misty memories of years ago,
Nor yielded hastily her cautious mind,
Suspicious of imposture and deceit.

And Other Poems

At last, convinced, with tears and cry of joy
She flung her snowy arms about my neck
And clung with many a kiss and fond caress,—
A kindly welcome home from years of war,
A guerdon meet for all my bitter woes.
In converse sweet the calm and blissful night
We spent, recounting all that Fate had brought,
Till gentle Slumber softly sealed our eyes
And Silence waited for the ruddy Dawn."

He paused, and when I raised my eyes had gone;
And half I wished the days would come again
When all the world was fresh and young; when sea
And sky and land yet teemed with mysteries;
When Science had not robbed us of the joy
Of Wonder; when the Vast Unknown gave scope
For Fancy's dream and Superstition's dread;
When pleasing Fear provoked the gallant soul;
When godlike men yet trusted in the strength
Of sinewed arm and brave, undaunted breast;
When lonely isles were homes of fairy queens;
When gods immortal deigned to dwell on earth
And mingle in th' affairs of mortal men,
Stand visible and thwart us face to face,
Or, taking human form and human voice,
Beside us walk as comrades hand in hand.

March, 1909.

A Blossom of the Sea

AVIATORS.

Terra, aqua, igni, aere victo, quid ultra?

PRESUMPTUOUS, man was deemed by poet sage
Because he dared in fragile bark to brave
What billows on the ocean levels rage;
Undaunted now he stoops *beneath* the wave,
Companion of leviathan and shark,
Or what of dread frequents that realm of dark.

Nay more; he yokes the lightning to his car,
Or steals its flaming torch to banish night;
Therewith he wings his words to friends afar,
Or dips his pencil in its flashing light;
Therewith he distant whirls the busy wheel
To delve the mine or shape the glowing steel.

Not satisfied to rush his iron steed
O'er hill and valley snorting smoke and flame,
Spurning the earth in reckless thundering speed,—
Not satisfied of bronze and steel to frame
His barge with heart of fire, that scorns the sweep
Of fiercest blasts that fret the frenzied deep,—

And Other Poems

Conqueror of earth, of water, and of fire,
He now essays the void and viewless air
Whose secret mysteries inflame desire
And tempt the bold, audacious breast to dare
The heights where soars no eagle's pinion swift,
Nor floating clouds their sunlit brows uplift.

Roamers of worlds where man has never gone,
Bring me the secrets of this rolling sphere.
Who blends the tintings of the glows of Dawn?
Whence ride the Tempests in their mad career?
Who pilots through the azure seas the clouds?
Where weave the Darknesses their sable shrouds?

Whence cometh Spring to wake and gladden earth,
And where does Winter forge his crystal chains?
Where do the restless lightnings have their birth,
And who their wild, impetuous course ordains?
Is Thunder's fortress in yon blue serene
Where hold the Silences their vast domains?

Are ye endowed with more than mortal sight,
Peering beyond our brief horizon rim?
Ken ye the wonders of the seas of light
Wherein our earth with all her kindred swims?
Can ye o'erpass the pale of Time and Place,
Afar discern and mete the bounds of Space?

A Blossom of the Sea

Have ye in deeps ethereal yet descried
The far faint loomings of "The Happy Isles"?
What is this thrill called Life, and where abide
Her secret springs? In what obscure defiles
Of vastness, ever blighting with his breath
All forms of being, lurks her conqueror, Death?

Have ye discerned beyond the Vast of Blue
Some clime where Death no more may Life assail,
Where Life may flee and Death no more pursue?
Or, in the last great End, shall Death prevail
And have dominion, broad and measureless,
O'er blank, chaotic voids of Nothingness?

Or, is death also but another form
Of life, or agent that prepares the way
For fuller, higher life, when all the storm
And chill are past? The fallen leaves decay;
But from their dust the dainty touch of Spring
May fragrant, radiant-bosomed flowers bring.

Can ye dissolve our doubts and nearer bring
The long-sought hour when we shall fully know
Life's origin and destiny, and fling
Aside the veils of mystery and show
Why nothing rests, from atoms of the mould
To e'en the hugest planet we behold?

And Other Poems

What means this all-pervading energy
Of Nature? Know ye whither does it tend?
The streamlet hastens to the distant sea,
Nor hath e'en there its restlessness an end.
In all existence nothing slumbereth—
Is motion life and loss of motion death?

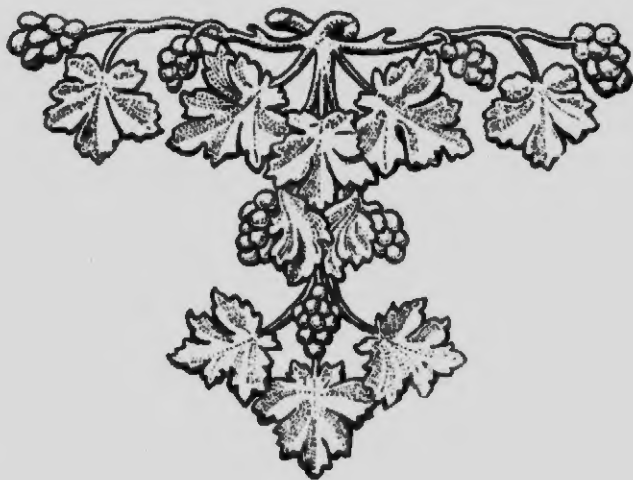
O whither sweeps this ceaseless, endless tide
Of being? Where and what its final goal?
Some Hand hath made and must its motions guide;
Some Mind Eternal planned the perfect Whole,
And somewhere, doubtless, in his purpose vast
Hath set a goal for each and all at last.

A Blossom of the Sea

FINIS.

WE SCAN the volume with a careless eye:
Its fancy may an idle hour beguile,
~~We scan the volume with a careless eye:~~
~~Its fancy may an idle hour beguile,~~
Its grief awake a momentary sigh,
Its merriment provoke a transient smile,
Its graver theme attract a passing thought;
But then we close and cast the book aside,
With half its hidden treasure yet unsought,
And all its inner beauty undescried.

E'en so, the Book of Life we take and find
Smiles, joys and hopes that now the heart elate,
Frets, pangs and tears that leave a trace behind,
And mysteries we may not penetrate;
We then replace it in the Author's hand,
And nothing of His purpose understand.



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